LENS DON THEAGENE

Heroes of Avangard

War of the Celestianites

First published by Lens Don Theagene 2025

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Heroes.... Arise!

First edition

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Thanks to a teacher named Mr. Hopkins for making me think of this series

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Dictionary

Valorent *(noun)*

A warrior who specializes in aerial weaponry such as guns, blasters, or other sky-bound tech. Known for precision, range attacks, and often chaotic energy in battle. Not to be confused with calm snipers—these folks are storm troopers with style.

> "The dude pulled out a Valorent-class plasma rifle like he was ready to rewrite the laws of physics."

Scarrist *(noun)*

A wielder of dark magic, especially those who manipulate energy like the Lunar Element or Nightmare Element. Scarrists are often feared due to their mysterious abilities, illusion magic, and manipulation of shadows. Some are born with this affinity; others are twisted into it.

> "You could tell by the glow—he was a full-on Scarrist, probably touched by the moon."

Vexes *(noun)*

Long-legged, spindly beasts with curved heads that arc backward, revealing massive, gleaming eyes. Usually red-skinned with unsettling movements. Vexes are known for speed, creepy soundless walking, and pack-hunting behavior. Unsettling? Yeah. Dangerous? Definitely.

> "We're not alone… The Vexes are watching from the rocks."

Uragas / Snow Uragas *(noun)*

Majestic birds that never touch the ground, only landing on high elevations like mountaintops, treetops, or tall structures. Snow Uragas are their frosty cousins, shimmering with icy feathers and adapted to cold regions. Known for grace, sharp intelligence, and being nearly impossible to catch.

> "Only a madman tries to bond with an Uraga—they choose you, not the other way around."

Zirixes *(noun)*

Lightning-infused monsters made of jagged rocks that serve as living armor. Electricity crackles through their bodies, making them volatile and explosive in battle. Zirixes are often found near storm-prone areas and are prized for their raw power and tank-like durability.

> "One Zirix stomp and the whole mountain trembled."

Lirm *(noun / insult)*

A slang term for a lazy Oceananite. Often used jokingly, but it can hit hard if said in a serious tone. A Lirm lounges more than they swim, avoids conflict, and always finds a current to nap in.

> "Quit being a Lirm and help us fight already!"

NOTES

The people in Iris Town are known as Nomanites, but they have a permit to go to Avangard and stay in Avangard.

Celestianites

Celestianites - *Celestianites are the most famous faction in Avangard. They are a society and an army that takes control of the land* ***Celestia****. They reign over the Heavenly Spot, Golden Region, and the Enchanted Kingdom. They are well known for being in the CL War.*

Descriptions: *Most Celestianites have white or yellow scales that act like feathers but are not. They are somewhat fluffy in a sense, and sometimes they're used as a survival technique. They have horns that sometimes are shaped around the head like a circle. Some of their tails have spikes poking out from the sides, and they're solid gold. Other Celestianites are born with this rare thing called Cosmonimbous. It's when a Celestianite is born with soft crystallized scales that could glimmer in colors of purple, blue, and indigo. This also means that the Celestianite is born with purple celestial energy, instead of yellow or white. It's rare at a 1 to 1,000,000 chance of it happening. Males at the average age of 15 are usually tall and large in size. While some at the minimum age of 11, are also tall and big, but usually short compared to the 15 year olds. They're wingspan is 50 feet, and their tails mostly have spikes. Most of the males have fur that is soft, but a little rough at the same time. The females are a lot shorter and slimmer at the average age of 14. At the age of 11, they are the size of an average desk. They have more fluffy and feathery scales than the males, and they are more calm. They have sharper claws than the males, which are used for farming in the Golden Region, or medication. They have yellow hair across their head to their spines, and their wingspan is about 42 feet.*

Kings or Queens: *King Vigilzante used to be the leader of the Celestianites, but sadly he died after their final war with the Lunaranites. He was the founder of*

the Lost Key. The Earth was normal before B.C., there were continents, but when B.C. started and Vigilzante came when the Lost Key crash landed, everything changed. He was the first Celestianite to ever roam the earth, and he named the place Avangard. He believed that freedom was a virtue, and everyone should be free to make their own choices.

Enemies: *Their enemies are the Lunaranites. Evil counterparts led by King Dreadixz, and want to rule the world of Avangard to make it their own. They live in a place called Foreshade, which is close to Celestia, which is why wars happen often. They had a fight between freedom or thralldom.*

Flamenites

Flamenites – The Flamenites are a grandiose and terrible faction in Avangard that has control over fire and heat elements. They used to be great in the tremendous kingdom of Scarletsville, a land filled with molten rivers and very high black spires. But then again, with enough war with almost every other tribe in Avangard, Scarletsville has been reduced to a mere burnt wasteland. The towering structures stand now as black skeletons covered with heavy layers of ash and cinders. They have, however, been keeping the Flamenites strong; they have adapted to this disaster and can continue using their most formidable weapon.

Descriptions - Most flamenites take after those creatures usually associated with fire, with the highest concentration of population being dragons. These dragons are initially in the form of human-like creatures, as they can transform themselves into this form whenever they want, to ensure that they could then live as ordinary citizens like the rest of the population. Their scales oozed red, orange, and molten gold shades, creating an appearance of white hot heat. Some Flamenites were actually born with armor-plating characteristics characterizing obsidian, providing them the strongest durability possible. Besides dragons, those life forms considered to be typical for Flamenites include Phoenixes, Magma Golems, Fire Tyrannosaurs, and other rare fire-associated creatures like lions and bears. Phoenixes typically inherit a resurrection feature, so they can die "once," only to ignite in flames, and then be born anew afterward. They are primarily made of molten ash, with veins glowing like liquid fire. Fire Tyrannosaurs have gigantic dimensions and terrifying appearances, which can roar and shoot up flames explosively. The elite-born Flamenites may also display some

extraordinary fire variations such as Azure Fire, Hellfire, and Explosion type energy upon birth. The very few who have been born with such features are believed to be destructive warriors and trained as elite fighters or warlords at a tender age. On average, they are much bigger and more muscular with horns resembling jagged volcanic rock. Their wingspans can be as high as 60 feet when in dragon mode, which ensure the possibility of producing infernos mid-flight. Females are much slimmer but no less strong, their claws sharper, and their ability to manipulate temperature is far more advanced. Their wings measure a smaller 50 feet but enable very sharp maneuvers through fiery environments.

Kings or Queens: King Scar is the complete and all-powerful king over all Flamenites. He is a tyrant but an honored one as he used to serve in the great war in the Avangard. Unlike most Flamenites, he possesses the ability to turn into a giant Magma Titan- a great figure over the battlefield, with molten fists capable of reshaping the land at his feet. His regime was characterized by conquest and survival, thus making sure Flamenites remain feared, even after the destruction of Scarletsville. In spite of that, King Scar aspires to have the former glory of the kingdom again. Thus, he leads his people in an unending attempt at vengeance against their enemies. Fire, after all, is the ultimate force of nature; it burns devastatingly but produces life anew. Under his reign, Flamenites continue burning through the remnant warfields, for the time being, reclining again. King Scar will restore honor to his fallen kingdom. Leading his people against the foes, he has proclaimed war. He considers fire to be the last force in nature, ultimately destructive and yet a precondition for rebirth. The Flamenites, under the king's reign, are going ahead destroying the remnants of war and will wait for the day to rise from the ashes once more.

Oceananites

Oceananites- The Oceananites form a mighty and enigmatic faction that governs the Gadian Sea Kingdom-a true underwater power. They are known to have fluid, water-like bodies that allow them to change forms at any time. Most Oceananites can adapt to becoming water-dwelling creatures like Water Dragons, sharks, eels, and many other beasts from the sea. Their bodies shine in shades of blue, teal, and silver, appearing to be in a continuous motion, just like the ocean surface. A few even have bioluminescent marks that glow in the dark depths of the sea. Unlike the other tribes, Oceananites do not depend on primitive weaponry; they use the currents of water, summon tidal waves, and generate high-pressure attacks to vanquish their foes.

Descriptions: Oceananites have bodies made entirely of water, though they can solidify parts of themselves when needed. Their forms range from humanoid figures with flowing, liquid-like skin to monstrous aquatic creatures. Their eyes often glow with a deep blue or bright cyan hue, and their voices carry an echo, as if spoken through a vast ocean. Some Oceananites are born with the rare ability to control ice, allowing them to freeze parts of their bodies into sharp, crystalline armor. While most Oceananites prefer to stay in their water forms, they can manifest physical bodies for brief periods when interacting with those outside of their domain. At an average age of 15, they are tall and muscular; their bodies resemble living waves, always shifting and flowing. They have larger fins, which often extend from their arms and back, thus aiding in swift movement underwater. Their voices are deep and commanding, which, because of a natural resonance, makes them sound like ancient sea gods. Their hands become webbed, and they can extend their fingers into razor-

sharp water blades. Females at the average age of 14 are more streamlined and agile, with thinner, more flexible water forms. They wear their bodies with a glowing pattern of spots that shifts with the changing of their feelings, thus making them beautiful and mesmerizing to look at. Their fins are smaller when compared to males, but they enable very precise and rapid movements. They have fangs that are sharper and more pronounced, and their voices can be soft and innocent, but with a flare of eeriness, could rise to that of a siren-like call that can lure or disorient foes.

Kings or Queens: King Gadian is the sovereign of Oceananites, which is a source of terror because he can change into the form of a gigantic Leviathan. He detests the chosen ones with fervor because he thinks that destiny has unjustly deprived him of powers needed for ruling Avangard. Though he regards himself as the world's hero, the ambition that drives him and the ruthless conquest even make him one of the gravest threats to it. Under him, the Oceananites waged war against multiple factions, wanting to drown their enemies underneath the tides and reshape Avangard in his own image.

Electronites

Electronites - The Electronites are powerful, seemingly a counter-faction close to superstition about lightning and electricity. They inhabit the Thunderstark Kingdom, where storms and lightning brew perpetually and the skies are harnessed as a medium of their powers. The electronites can transform into electrically charged creatures such as Lightning Dragons, Lightning Birds, Lightning Panthers, and finally, Cheetahs. Electricity is in them, so it transforms them into deadly warriors and fast travelers, with the sky and storms bending down to their command. The kingdom is a beautiful citadel, sitting on high, storm-clad mountains that are always crackling with energy in the air.

Descriptions: The Electronites are born with a gift of electricity and electricity manipulation. They are glowingly marked, with energy running through their skin. The males are tall, muscular and strong with ages around fifteen, almost always turning into Lightning Dragons or Lightning Birds. They have large, bright wings resembling storm clouds streaked with raw electric energy. Their eyes were piercing electric blue or yellow, showing the very lightning that coursed through their veins. As Lightning Birds, the males could fly through the skies at breakneck speeds, leaving lightning streaks in their wake. Females are generally around 14; swift, agile, and capable of transforming into Lightning Panthers or Lightning Birds. They are fast and sleek, faster than the eye could follow. Their fur or feathers are charged with electric energy, and their eyes glow, showing their mastery over lightning. Although not as large as the males, they have exceptional speed and precision, using agility to outmaneuver their foes on the battlefield. Their lightning abilities contribute to a supernatural, storm-like aura.

Kings or Queens: King Thunderstark, is the ruler of the Electronites, a laid-back and chill dude. He would never look for conflict and would look for peace in his kingdom, which he considers stability and freedom above all. Yet he will not tolerate any disrespect, especially when it concerns his privacy, and does not welcome any guests who trespass into his castle. Once he is provoked, King Thunderstark takes the form of Liren, the Electrifying Dragon Turtle. In this massive, powerful form, he becomes a force of nature, wielding storms and unleashing horrific attacks of electricity. Though he prefers peace, King Thunderstark will not hesitate to brazenly stick up for his people and his land, unleashing the wrath of a storm for his kingdom's defense when the need arises.

Dunenanites

Dunenanites: The Dunenanites form a resilient and peaceful faction within the great deserts of Avangard. They are people attached to the earth and bearing a wisdom that permits them to transform into all desert creatures, be it Desert Cats or Desert Foxes, Sidewinders or Lizards, or even Sand Dragons. Known for their naturally soft strength and adaptability, the Dunenanites master the art of survival and cohabitation with the sometimes-harsh desert environment. Their residence is within the ancient Pyramids of Markilao, where they keep the secrets of the land, serving as healers and care-takers. The Pyramid Dune later helped restore and protect so that future generations could appreciate the beauty beyond destruction after the destructive battles between Lunaranites and Celestianites.

Descriptions: The Dunenanites are truly people of the desert, as their skin is colored sandy gold. They are built agile and light, well-suited for desert survival. Such transformations, being efficient for secrecy and speed, generally make the males less impressive in size compared to females. Males are found transforming into Desert Foxes or, at around 15 years, Sidewinders-the latter being small and agile animals that are unfortunate. Desert Cats, Sand Dragons, or big lizards-this is the general case, where the female is larger and more powerful than the male. Their fur or scales glow golden, and their eyes shine like the summer sun over the dunes. These are the true warriors of the Dunenanites with amazing feats of strength and agility. Their furious spirit and protective instincts make them formidable opponents in battle. The females' transformations allow them to control sandstorms and desert winds without effort, ranking them as one of the most resilient and deadly forces in the desert.

Kings or Queens: Currently, Queen Dune rules over the Dunenanites, known for being gentle and wise in thought. Others believe in peacefulness along with harmony and spend their whole life making her kingdom remain balanced. An expert in desert healing and restoration, Queen Dune rehabilitated the Pyramids of Markilao after the deadly wars between the Lunaranites and Celestianites. Her work was a great boon to the Dunenanites, where she is revered by her people. Queen Dune is mighty and upholds the gentleness and composure for which she is known. However, like any mother with her cubs, she can call forth the entire desert, summon great sandstorms and the fiercest tribal creatures when provoked.

Frozenanites

Frozenanites- They are the tribe of the cold, frosty lands of Avangard, where they are recognized deeply with the power of ice and winter. Once, she was only a Queen who ruled for these Frozenanites, the fiercely noble Queen Frost, but now this tribe is without a leader because of her tragic transformation into the Glacier Loose. The Frozenanites have the capacity to change into astonishingly legendary and mighty creatures of the cold like Ice Dragons, Yeti, Ice Bears, Snow Hrics (sharp toothed, omnivorous bunnies) or Arctic Foxes. Though they live now in an uncertain state, they pay homage to their forebears, the forebears from whom they diverged after their queen's loss.

Descriptions: The Frozenanites commonly have normal human skin. While others have skin in a bluish-white hue, often with icy markings or tattoos that shimmer like snowflakes in the cold. Their bodies are built for survival in the harshest of environments, with robust, muscular frames. The males typically transform into Ice Dragons or Snow Hrics, with their scales resembling the frost-covered peaks of their homeland. These transformations grant them the power to control freezing winds, create blizzards, and encase enemies in ice. Generations, females, on the other hand, are the more volatile and powerful types. They often take the shape of even larger, much more terrifying beasts like Ice Bears or Yeti. The physical prowess they possess is absolutely amazing, and their claws could shred the thickest of ice or foes like butter. Also, the ice magic of females is much stronger than the male ones since it can do evil things with the cold. They can make freezing storms, ice walls, and even freeze opponents with a single touch. The aggressive nature of the Frozenanite females does not only mark them; they will go all out to protect their

people in times of need.

Kings or Queens: Queen Frost, the earliest, grandest queen of Frozenanites, became a legend when she turned tragically. It was because she hated so much that she got cursed by an ancient Avangard legend all the time; she was hooting during the nonstop wars between the Celestianites and Lunaranites in Eclitsic. Clearly according to the tale, anyone hooted more than the prescribed 365 days would transform into the very animal they feared and detested. The true sign of Queen Frost's transformation into the Glacier Loose marked the end of her reign. Once a proud and wise leader, she became consumed by the curse and transformed into a wild beast with no recollection of her past life. Now called the Mysterious Loose, she traverses her temple mercilessly slaughtering all who dare to encroach into her territory. Without a queen above them, the Frozenanites have to fend for themselves without leadership, and their once unified tribe has become increasingly fractured and filled with uncertainty.

Earthnites

Earthnites – The stronghold of the Earthnites make their being a tribe truly embedded into the strength of the very soil that forms the Earth. To them, the land gives astonishing physical prowess and the capability of modifying their environment. Because of their intrinsic connection with rocks, soil, and the ground beneath their feet, they turn into really nasty Rocky Bears, Rockslide Ankylosauruses, Rocky Triceratopses, and even Tree Golems. Their metamorphoses grant them immeasurable strength and endurance, making them consistently one of the toughest warriors in Avangard.

Descriptions: The Earthnites are stocky, tough, and rock-like in appearance. Their bodies are rough, stone-like, giving them both protective and offensive abilities. They are mostly large males who have rough skin with the surprising ability to change into massive creatures like Rocky Bears or Rockslide Ankylosauruses. The males boast unyielding toughness and brute strength, moving mountain ranges, crushing boulders, and fully resisting even the harshest of assaults. Made for survivability and brute physical power, the Earthnites are natural-born warriors. (No females live in the Rufty Mountains or are Earthnites) The few that are gifted with the very same powers are more lithe and flexible. They basically turn into Rocky Triceratops or Tree Golems, emphasizing more on mobility and intelligence than sheer power. Their shift into forms gives them the power to control and manipulate plants or use the earth to bind their enemies or create shields for their own protection. An equal balance of strength and finesse, their calmness and strategic capability afford them relevance as protectors of the Earthnites.

Kings or Queens: King Bolder, the laid-back yet assertive leader of the

Earthnites, has an affinity for stones, expressions of dirt, and lounging about-or for enjoying his favorite pastime. He is a very lazy and casual guy but when it comes to leadership, he is of course very strong. This giant, tough warrior is a threat when he changes into an Earth Titan. He may look like an easy-going guy, but he carries a lot of weight-the kind that gives him authority and when necessary, he enforces it. King Bolder can sometimes act like a bossy male but he never loses his cool when making decisions for the sake of maintaining strength in unity amongst the Earthnites.

Blushinites

Blushinites – The Blushinites are a tribe thriving in the Land of Hearts, where love, charm, and playful mischief hold dominion. Famed for their delightful self, such trait dubs them the blushing people, being chiefly admired for their flirty nature and enchanting presence. They shy away from wars and quarrels, and ever spread joy and love wherever they go. Their best dream is to see a smile on the faces of everyone, and for that, they use their natural charisma and charm to achieve their goal.

Description: Heart-shaped wings of soft, feathery material distinguish the Blushinites, fluttering as they move. These wings glow in the quietest of pinks, reds, and even golds—their colors being a beautiful emanation of warmth and affection. The males of the Blushinites would be found flirting with everyone, always complimenting, teasing, or winning the hearts of anyone they might come into contact with. They are charming, playful, and very energetic; they want to have someone feel special with the words they say or with their actions.But the females are equally breathtaking; many of them, too, show signs of flirting; however, some prefer a bit nuanced and sweet approach. Their wings are no less stunning; they can make others blush even with a single smile or a perfectly timed word. While personality differs, what remains common with all Blushinites is that they are kind and can really make anyone around them feel beloved and treasured. Their culture focuses purely on the beauty of love and affection, and connection, making them the most approachable and delightful tribe in Avangard.

Kings or Queens: Queen Relish is the loving and charismatic monarch of the Blushinites. The spirit of her people lives in her; for she exemplifies playfulness, flirtatiousness, and is always kind and pleasant. Queen Relish has her charming attitude and her fun-spreading personality endeared by

her subjects. Though she flutters through life light-heartedly, she turns an excellent leader as and when needed, serious, then fun-loving. Peace, love, and harmony define Queen Relish's reign, and under her governance, the Blushinites still symbolize warmth and joy within Avangard.

Forestinites

Forestinites- The peaceful, in-the-forest-bred Forestinites thus also take up residence deep within the green riches of the forested spaces of Avangard. They connect to the earth and thrive harmoniously between the company of plants and animals. The society here is largely tranquil and balanced along the lines of growth, protection, and preservation of nature. Their homes would be treehouses or carved out into the supports of great, old giant trees. The Forestinites do not crave for war; they protect their most sacred lands and defend the forest from anyone who wants to hurt it.

Descriptions: The Forestinites in their really beautiful earthy forms often resemble the earthy animals-they transform, most of them, into graceful Deers or Forest Fawns, their anatomy patterned with green leaves making them imperceptible from the surroundings in which they dwell. Some are heavier in build and can transform into Leafy Stegosauruses with back appendages mimicking plant plates that resemble leaves and moss, for perfect disguise among foliage, the rare Plant Dragon transforming Forestinites are really something outstanding-their bodies are as though made from the woods' plants and trees, their scales like bark and wings are like leaf. Forestinites male are typically fleet-footed, able to leap supplely through the forest. They move with the silken speed and grace of a deer. Their movements are so swift that they rarely get noticed by others. They can hunt their prey stealthily because of their swift moves. They are otherwise slim and sleek and used for quick movement and being adapted in the ever-changing forest environment. (Only Females are Forestinites) They are all agile and swift, but the females are a little more protective and nurturing. They generally take care of the forest and give it life because of

the bond they have with nature. Somewhat softer features that give them quite a delicate look but communicating well with all little insects and the greatest beasts are the traits of the females.

Kings or Queens: Of all the Forestinites, Queen Grolian rules as the one who is wise and kind. A part of connecting with the earth, she makes herself a protector of the forest and protects all earth's creatures in it. Calm and composed, often surrounded by animals and plants, this queen nurtures the land she loves. She has highly developed diplomacy by which her people live in harmony with their immediate surroundings. The thriving Forestinites are peaceful and nature-based, still prospering today as they spout life and growth throughout the forest. Queen Grolian is to rule by her love for nature through which she inspires all Forestinites to live in harmony with the land.

Soundanites/Musinites

Soundanites/Musinites - Music, and nothing wrong can happen to them. The Soundanites in Musicia are known for their dazzlingly colorful and poetically attractive people, and this ethereal land is where the melodious rhythms and lilting strains can be heard from every nook. It is a society in which sound beautifies existence, where music forms the heart of culture and daily life. Being endowed with incredible musical skills, Soundanites' society bases all its activities on harmony, rhythm, and creative expression. Everything in their lives revolves around music, such as in their rituals and celebrations and when communicating with one another. The Soundanites are a sight to behold whenever they are performing on stage, dazzling concert halls with grand symphonies or jamming in the streets with spontaneous beats improvising in the streets, melodically sweetening the air.

Descriptions: The Soundanites always look spectacular, with their transformations often suggesting the musical overtone of their culture. Most of them transform into a Musical Tiger, where its stripes glowed with notes that pulsed with the rhythm of step. These tigers make a thunderous sound roaring, and their movements flow like a symphony. Another very common change is the Musical Bird; brilliantly colored feathers make them look special, and the soaring wings bring the sky some melodious tranquility. The Harmony Peacocks, rarely seen, spread their extravagant plumage like a sheet of music; each feather gives a different note when caressed by the wind. The Soundanite tribe consists mostly of women who have an intense bond with the musical aspect of the world. These women normally possess an innate gift of singing, musical instrumentation, or composition. Their manipulation of sound goes beyond music; they use

sound for communication and even combat. They are the custodians of the rhythm and melodies that define their society. The few males in the tribe remain highly revered. Most are rappers or music producers celebrated for their rhythmic flow and mastery of beats. These males lay down skillful flows that help to generate powerful rhythms, and they are often the very foundation that holds together the Soundanite musical traditions. Some males can also transform into musical animals like Musical Tigers, thus combining their skills with that of their beastly form.

Kings or Queens: Queen Soundzwave is the wise and artistic ruler of Soundanites. Famous for her beautiful musical prowess, she is a visionary who believes that music can heal, unite, and uplift. Queen Soundzwave leads all her people with a great love for sound, making sure that every rhythm in Musicia flows smoothly and harmoniously. She is revered by her people, and it is said that her songs bring peace to the land. Her reign is defined by creativity and joy, a reign in which each stroke of the scepter beats in time with music, whether in matters of the state or daily life. It is during this age that Soundanites live on in perfect harmony with the world of Music.

Mechanites

Mechanites – They are a deteriorating faction in Avangard, once proud pioneers of invention and machinery, now reduced to a rusting society under the crumbling rule of **King Gordiman**, a monarch so clueless he once tried to crown a toaster. The Mechanites were born from an obsession with mechanical evolution, replacing their biology with tech over generations—an experiment that backfired hard. Their metallic city, Mechamio, is filled with sputtering towers, malfunctioning bots, and half-broken machinery that clanks louder than it works. They continue to build, not out of purpose, but out of habit.

Descriptions: Mechanites appear cobbled together with wires, gears, steam vents, and glowing power cores embedded into their chests or heads. Their bodies are often mismatched—one arm a claw, the other a cannon, legs replaced with wheels or stilts, eyes swapped for scopes or monitors. Many emit faint ticking sounds or steam hisses with every movement. Their aura isn't intimidating—it's uncomfortable, uncanny, like a broken puppet trying to act normal. Male Mechanites often become Brute-Crafters or Gearborn Crushers—hulking, half-dead juggernauts powered by corrupted steam cores and unstable energy. These walking scrap heaps are known for swinging wrecking-ball fists or collapsing mid-fight from overheating. While strong, they are wildly unreliable. There is one more male category for Mechanites, and its the Mecha-Wheelers. They have wheels for feet and their bodies act like a transformer basically. Female Mechanites tend to fill roles as Tinker-Spies or Glitchbinders—sly, tech-savvy saboteurs who can rewire enemies' minds or cloak themselves in glitch fields. They're clever, resourceful, and tend to have actual working

parts—unlike their male counterparts who are mostly walking explosions waiting to happen.

Kings and Queens – King Gordiman is technically the ruler, but the dude is *so* out of touch he once gave a motivational speech to a microwave. Once a respected engineer, Gordiman suffered a head-screw malfunction that turned him into a delusional figurehead. Gordiman, however, still parades around in a rusted crown, giving orders to machines that no longer respond. Driven less by conquest and more by *survival*, the Mechanites are often ignored by the other factions… until one of their unstable inventions explodes and causes a catastrophe. Most of them just want to fix themselves before they fall apart completely, but some still dream of rebuilding their kingdom—and proving that being a walking pile of bolts doesn't mean you're out of the game just yet.

Lunaranites

Lunaranites- They are secretive and powerful factions within Avangard that are taken directly against Celestianites. A society born of rage and betrayal chasing power in the shadowy island of Foreshade gives these entities the term Lunaranites. They are rumored with the art of Lunar Energy, a mysterious force that gives them the ability to control the moon by producing illusions, terrifying creatures, and even manipulating the darkness. Their long-lasting feuds with Celestianites are due to the history of hatred and the desire for revenge.

Descriptions: Overall, Lunaranite portrays hollowness, and threatened appearance in the same spirit associated with the dark moon itself. Most Lunaranites have dark, shiny, obsidian-like scales that glimmer faintly under the moonlight, with sharp, glowing eyes. Most of them transform into fierce creatures associated with the night, such as Lunar Dragons, Nightmare Wolves, and Lunar Serpents, animals that symbolize darkness and the unknown. Their powers are shadows manipulated, terrifying illusions, and calling dark, lunar beasts. Most of the Lunaranite males are warriors and leaders of the faction. They are usually very massive, overpowering figures that transform into Lunar Dragons or Nightmare Wolves. They draw their incredible strength from manipulating and twisting the shadows around them, disappearing into the dark, generating illusions that further confuse their enemies, and striking deadly blows when they'd least expect it. These creatures are ferocious, aggressive, and motivated by conquest. The Lunaranite females are more subtle and sly, usually becoming Lunar Serpents or other sleek and deadly animals. They live and breathe stealth, deception, and illusion. Most often, they flaunt sorcery-yielding dark magic that controls minds, curses

shadows, and weaves surviving webs of lies to protect their clan from demise. The majority-as their physical form would be inferior to their male counterparts-are considered to threaten dangerousness because of their intelligence and ability to turn the tides from behind the scenes.

Kings and Queens - The Lunaranites fall under the rule of Dreadixz, a cold and vengeful ruler who once served as a miner in the Narian Caves; this said place, indeed, became the birthplace of his transformation into the first Lunaranite. Once Dreadixz was a lowly miner, searching for wealth, but once he unearthed the Lost Key, he was transformed from his former self into a creature of darkness, reaping immense power. He was the first Lunaranite, wanting vengeance against those who had wronged him, even the Celestianites. He founded the kingdom of Lunaranite in the mysterious and shadowy land of Foreshade and declared war against the Celestianites. Driven by a deep-seated craving for power, Dreadixz believed the Lost Key would unlock for him the ways to conquer because he wanted that powerful artifact to augment his powers and give him ultimate control over Avangard. All these struggles are ruthless because they are filled with a cold underlying calculative demeanor in his reigning style.

Lost Key Prophecy

Celestial's Fight, Earth's Might, Lightning's Surge, Water's Merge, Flame's Burns

The five must go through all Elemental Continents,
Defeat their worst enemies, to get more powerful as they venture on.
A secret message is hidden in the scroll,
Saying that all five of the heroes shall fold—
Their own destinies to be known as gall,
And if they don't find the Lost Key, the Celestianites will fall.
And if the Celestianites fall, the Lunaranites will prevail,
And once they prevail, the world of Avangard will become all dust and fail...

Meet the Main Cast!

Don - Main protagonist of the book and has the Celestial Element. And he has the characteristics of a Celestial Dragon. He's 12 years old and he is usually a self-confident guy who can be sarcastic and funny at the same time. He makes the best of things no matter what happens, and he never gives up. He is also determined to face any challenge in his way, no matter the cost.

Olsen - Best friends with Don and also is 12 years old. He's a big black guy who wears a green hoodie and black pants. He wears black shoes and has a short buzz cut. He has the Earth Element and he's basically tough and grounded. Smart in academics but somehow is the opposite in real life. He has the characteristics of a Rockslide Ankylosaurus.

Prince - The fastest Lightning Bird kid in the entire school. He's always very funny and manages to make people laugh with no problem. He's 11 years old and he wears a blue shirt with yellow pants. He has small dreads and he's black. He has the Lightning Element, which also makes him fast. He wears speedy blue electrifying shoes. Has the characteristics of a Lightning Bird.

Demaurion - A very hot headed Water Elemental User that has the characteristics of a Leviathan. Can be chill but has real anger issues, also much of a sly troublemaker and is a prankster. He's 11 years old and he wears a green, white, and dark blue striped jacket. He's mixed and he has long brown dreads wearing some dark blue underwater shoes.

Archie - The fire boy who has the characteristics of a phoenix who literally loves to cause trouble, or he just does it by accident. He's 11 years old and he wears a red shirt with blue jeans. He has brown hair that curves upwards to the right, it sometimes catches on fire. Uses the Fire Element and his race color is white. Wears orange shoes that allow him to be immune to lava.

PROLOGUE

Ever since B.C. started, people began to gain natural powers that were later called "Elements." Everybody was born with one, so it was really common. There were three different types of Elements: Elemental, Natural, and Beast. Everyone used different Elements — some were for combat, and some couldn't be used for combat but had other uses instead. The Lost Key is the power source of the entire Land of Avangard, and it's the reason the people living in Avangard are born with Elements. It keeps the world alive and well — without it, destruction could follow. It's a very powerful key that can also be used as a weapon to destroy. The Lost Key was created at the center of the universe, then crash-landed on Earth after its long space journey. It crashed back when dinosaurs roamed the earth and stayed buried until it was found in B.C. by the first Celestianite Dragon, Vigilzante. Ever since the first Celestianite was born,

it was the smartest of all creatures. When another Celestianite was born, they mated and produced two more. As more Celestianites appeared, the population grew. They took over the dinosaurs' land and waited until they died off, so they could keep the land for themselves and name it "Celestia." Celestia had the Golden Region, the Heavenly Spot, and the Enchanted Kingdom. That was until the Lost Key was used by Vigilzante to create all the Elemental Tribes, and the people who lived in them were called Elementalnites. For example, people who live in Scarletsville are called "Flamenites," and people who live in the Thunderstark Kingdom are called "Electronites." Since the Lost Key could grant wishes, it created 12 tribes on land and one in the sea — the Gadian Sea Kingdom. Then creatures like Zirixes and Uragas started to appear, and they settled in some of the tribes' lands if the environment suited them. People also began gaining beast-like characteristics representing their respective Elements, which was honestly clutch for survival. And boom — that's your intro to the world of Avangard.

10,000 Years Ago During the CL War

Through the Pyramids of Markilao, a blood-to-blood battle raged. The sandy wind howled from afar, and the gusts were fierce. Hurricanes roared across the land, tearing up trees and pyramids alike.

The sky was a blanket of gray, with no sun to shine — just a dark, lifeless zone. In the middle of the pyramids, the Celestianites and Lunaranites clashed again.

With their spears, they stabbed, slashed, and sliced each other without holding back. Both sides fired energy bullets and beams from their mouths, causing massive destruction.

Five Celestianites huddled behind a large, cracked stone pillar. One of them was Blightscaw, a top-ranked Celestianite soldier. He had tough white scales, a shiny gold belly, and shimmering golden horns and wings. His scales from head to tail were sharp and dangerous — he was the most serious fighter in the entire army.

Lunaranites fired lunar beams at the five behind the pillar, but each Celestianite had a Divine Arrow to fight back. Blightscaw peeked over the pillar and sniped one Lunaranite, then another teammate followed. They ducked back down to reload their arrows.

Blightscaw glanced at the Lost Key behind him and sighed.

"Alright, where am I even gonna put this thing?! Why was I chosen to hide it?!" he muttered, his scales sharpening.

One comrade raised an eyebrow at him. "You're chosen because you're the most impossible one to beat, right? You should be able to hide it safely, so we can

buy enough time to use it in a few years. We don't want the Lunaranites to win again — they've done too much damage."

Another teammate peered over the pillar and sniped another Lunaranite. "Look, man, you've gotta do it. For the army, your family, the world!"

Blightscaw looked down at the key, and a confident snarl escaped him. He swiped the key from the ground with his claws, and the wind kicked up.

He flapped his wings and blasted into the air, heading toward the colossal, sand-colored pyramid in front of him. The wind howled, whipping up the sand into a raging dust storm.

Blightscaw flew through the thick brown storm, struggling as the dust blinded him. The wind got stronger, pushing the Lunaranites and Celestianites apart — and making it even worse for Blightscaw. He fought through it, but the more he tried to speed up, the weaker his wings became.

"YOU CAN DO THIS, BLIGHTSCAW!"

one of the Celestianites shouted, their voice cracking through the violent air.

As Blightscaw battled the storm, more Celestianites cheered him on. He looked down, a sorrowful expression on his face at first — but then his eyes hardened with determination. He turned back to the pyramid and pushed forward through the wind without hesitation.

The dust storm tried to drag him down, but Blightscaw shattered through the barrier, speeding upward through the swirling chaos. He finally reached the top of the pyramid, flying above it as the storm twisted into a tornado around him, his celestial energy blazing.

As the dust swirled violently and the ground trembled, Blightscaw quickly placed the key into a square-shaped structure made of the pyramid's sandy blocks.

The moment the key slid into place, a massive burst of white and yellow energy unleashed a shockwave across the entire Pyramids of Markilao, sending everyone scattering. Celestial energy crackled and surged around Blightscaw, the tornado roaring even stronger.

Blightscaw was now floating — not by his wings, but because the tornado lifted him. He began to radiate a blinding light that erupted into a massive ring-shaped explosion, ending the tornado's rampage.

And at the center of the square structure above the pyramid, there was... nothing.

The Lost Key had vanished.

Celestia
Golden Reigion
Heavenly Spot
Enchanted Kingdom
Forshade
King Dreadixz's Kingdom

CH.1 Heroes Arise

My alarm did *not* go off.

Of course it didn't.

I launched outta bed like I was late for saving the universe. Spoiler: I was just late for middle school. Equally dangerous, honestly.

Red hoodie? Crumpled on the floor like a defeated Pokémon.

Jeans? Halfway inside out.

Hair? Looking like I lost a fight with a ceiling fan.

Me? Glorious disaster.

I slapped on my clothes, shoved a half-eaten granola bar in my mouth, and bolted out the door like I was being chased by regret.

The sky was doing its golden-purple glow thing—sun barely up, air all crisp and perfect. And for once? No evil portals. No sky lasers. No dramatic boss music. Just… peace.

I hit the sidewalk and jogged toward school—well, tried to.

"YO, DON! THAT YOU?"

I looked over and saw **Old Man Vek** chilling on his porch, squinting over his *daily newspaper*, which had absolutely nothing to do with me, by the way. Looked like it had a huge headline about some squirrels taking over a bird feeder.

"Morning, Mr. Vek!" I called out, already speed-walking like my life depended on it.

"You're runnin' late again, huh?" he said, sipping a mug of something suspiciously green. "You know what happened the last time you skipped breakfast—you tried to fight a fire hydrant."

"*ONE TIME,* Mr. Vek! ONE TIME!" I shouted back, wheezing.

He cackled so hard he nearly dropped his mug.

"Watch out for those hydrants, kid!" he called after me. "They've got teeth!"

I waved as I turned the corner, smiling even though I was already feeling the panic start to bubble.

As I passed the playground, chaos erupted.

A bunch of little kids spotted me from behind the fence like they were spotting Bigfoot in sneakers.

"IT'S DON!"

"THE GUY WHO ACCIDENTALLY FLEW INTO A TREE LAST MONTH!"

"HE'S GOT POWERS!!!"

I spun around, grinning, and struck a superhero pose. "Still just Don. My only superpower is being fashionably late."

"CAN YOU FLY?!"

"Nope! But I can trip with dramatic flair!"

They cracked up like it was the funniest thing they'd ever heard. Honestly? I was kinda proud of that one.

Then came the rest of the walk. I passed **Mrs. Lenu**, sweeping outside her corner shop like she was about to start breakdancing with the broom.

"Morning, Don," she said, not even looking up. "You're running."

"Gotta hustle or I'll be toast!"

She smirked. "Well, don't burn yourself."

I gave her a little salute, then promptly tripped on a pebble. Smooth.

By now, people were peeking out their windows, giving me little nods, waves, and "there goes that boy again" kind of looks. Cars honked—not in an angry way, but in that "you got this!" way.

Mr. Nibbs, the ice cream guy, tossed me a frozen pop. I caught it without stopping.

"You're gonna need the energy, hero boy!" he laughed.

I turned down another block—and that's when I saw **Jax the mailman** absolutely getting *wrecked* by two rogue delivery bots going full Terminator.

One was flailing around with a barcode scanner like it was a sword. The other looked like it was about to explode over a misdelivered envelope.

"JAX!" I yelled, already channeling a soft purple glow into my hands.

In five seconds flat, I zapped one bot into standby mode, then tripped the other one with a banana peel I'd *completely forgotten* was in my pocket. Don't ask why. It's Don logic.

"You good?" I asked as I helped Jax up.

He blinked. "Did you just throw a fruit-based projectile?"

"Strategic potassium-based takedown. Totally intentional."

"…You're late for school again, aren't you?"

I checked the time on my phone—and my heart *dropped.*

"8:27?! BRO I'M GONNA GET DETENTION FOR ETERNITY."

And then I screamed.

Like, loud. Birds flew out of trees. Someone across the street dropped a smoothie. I was full Gremlin Mode.

I booked it. Hard. Backpack flapping, sneakers skidding, frozen pop still in my mouth like a champion.

As I darted across town, **Old Man Vek** shouted from three blocks back:

"RUN LIKE THE WIND, YOU LITTLE ELEMENTAL WEIRDO!"

And that, my friend, is how my morning started. No prophecies. No shadowy figures. No ancient secrets.

Just a red hoodie, a late kid, and a whole town that somehow still loved me even when I tripped over my own shoelace.

A Few Minutes Later

I was *sprinting* through the school hallways like my life depended on it. Because honestly? It kinda did.

Name's Lens Don the Celestianite. I'm 12, I've got dragon traits, and I'm part of the Celestianite Race—which totally explains the horns, wings, and all that sparkle. But before we dive into the wildness that happened

today, lemme give you the lowdown on *me.*

So yeah. Twelve. I've got crystallized purple horns, shiny crystal wings with weirdly fluffy scales, and a long violet tail with white stripes and jagged spikes. Thanks to Cosmonimbous (don't ask me to spell that twice), my scales are crystal-y but soft. Kinda like armored marshmallows. The rest of me? Just your average Black kid with a buzz cut, rockin' a red hoodie, blue jeans, and black-and-red Nike Skechers.

I live in Avangard—this crazy fantasy world that happened after the continents mashed together and the planet went full RPG mode. Now we've got Elements. Everyone's born with one. Mine? Celestial. A rare light-purple energy that basically lets me do anime-level nonsense. If I collect all nine Power Gems, I get even more cracked.

My dream? Be a *hero.* A real Hero of Avangard. I wanna be famous. I used to be the background NPC—awkward, loud, confident for no reason. Still kinda am. That "confidence" backfires a lot. Like, embarrassing-volleyball-game levels of backfire. Life = certified wreck.

People clown me all the time. Say I'm weak, say I can't fight. It sucks. I don't even want attention anymore—but I do. You feel me? I wanna be more. Not just loud. Not just weird. I wanna be *worthy.*

Anyway. Back to the chaos.

The school was lit—literally. Sunlight blazed through the windows, lighting up cream-colored walls and white ceilings. No lights on. Still buzzing with Elemental madness.

I *booked it* through packed hallways. I had to leap over Emely's icy hallway river. "Watch it, Ice Bird!"

"Sorry!" she shouted, already melting it. (Love that girl. Ice Element. Hyper as hell.)

Then—fireballs. *Great.* Archie again. I flared my wings, dodged hard, and smacked one with my tail.

"Fifth time this week!" Archie yelled.

"Just shut it, hot pot!" I snapped. Dude *thrives* on chaos.

Vines next. Lonnie Mae was just *vibing,* chucking forest magic for fun. I ninja'd over thorns and slid under branches.

Then—PRINCE. Zoomed by in lightning form.

"PRINCE! NO RUNNING IN THE HALLS!" the principal roared.

What did he do? *Flew.*

"NO FLYING EITHER!"

Classic.

I ducked Olsen's rock pillars, dodged Keyler's sticky webs, and passed Ella being totally unbothered. Room 101 ahead—I SLID in like an action hero.

Everyone. Was. Already. There.

EVERY KID I RAN PAST.

I froze. Brain: error 404.

Mr. Bassi, (the 24 year old man who wore a white shirt and green pants rocking a crew cut) gave me that disappointed teacher smirk. "You're late."

"Uhm, technically I got here in one second so I'm not *that*—"

"You're lucky it wasn't two or that would've been detention. Sit."

I dropped into my front-row seat. He was the teacher that was half man, half bull, he had two bull horns on the top of his head, poking out from his hair. This was supposed to be history class. Keyword: *supposed.*

Mr. Bassi turned to the board and just… stood there. Awkward silence.

"Sooo… aren't you gonna teach us?" Mason asked.

Bassi blinked. "Wait. This is *history*?"

Whole class: *Facepalm.*

"DUDE. You're the teacher. Just do your job!"

He sighed. "Look, I'm a math teacher, okay? History ain't my thing. Should we talk about the Civil War or—"

"THE HISTORY OF AVANGARD!" we all yelled.

"Right! That! Totally knew that." He scrambled to his desk, grabbed a chunky book, and flipped it open.

"Alright. Let's talk about the CL War."

He cleared his throat. "Year **17,975 B.C.**, the CL War began. It all started with an ancient artifact called the Lost Key, hidden by a Celestianite to keep it away from the Lunaranites—an evil tribe that wanted to conquer Avangard. Their leader, Dreadixz, declared war, hungry for total control.

The Celestianites and Lunaranites battled for years. The Lunaranites were stronger, had more troops, and crushed us in most fights. Celestianites—dragon-like beings with Elemental powers—had Light, Astral, and Celestial Elements. Vigilzante had Celestial. Most looked feathered or scaly, but they were all powerful… Most of them had hard scales, and many of them looked feathered, even though that was just an appearance. Their horns were circular, feathered halos, and they were primarily white, gold, and yellow. These dragons fought for peace and freedom.

The Lunaranites, on the other hand, were mostly black and purple—that was the extent of their color. They had long, curved horns that were either violet or black, and their scales were sharp and dangerous. They were the kind of dragons that sought power and destruction, craving control over the land. They viewed those around them as mere pawns, using everyone as slaves.

They became an army when Dreadix declared his speech:

"YOU WANT POWER? YOU WANT FULL CONTROL?! DO YOU WANT REVENGE ON YOUR ENEMIES?! DO YOU WANT THE WORLD TO CHANGE?! WELL, FOLLOW ME! AS YOUR NEW LEADER, DREADIXZ THE SHADOW LORD! AND IF YOU DO, YOU WILL GAIN THE FREE WILL TO TAKE THIS WRETCHED NATION!"

After their final war, their leader, Vigilzante, fell to Dreadixz. Before his death, however, he wrote a poem, which was passed on as a prophecy:

"Five must find the Lost Key, then the one who defeats at least 11 beasts, including Dreadixz, shall be the chosen Celestianite Leader."

Suddenly, the intercom blasted loud and sharp:

"ATTENTION STUDENTS! SOME DARK SHADOW-LIKE BALL IS FLYING AT US AT MAX SPEED! MAKE SURE YOU EVACUATE THE SCHOOL QUICKLY!"

I jolted up from my desk. "What the heck?! What's going on?!"

Everyone scrambled, full panic mode. Mr. Bassi sprinted to the windows. The yellow sun dimmed. The sky swirled deep purple, thunderclouds crackling. Wind howled so hard it rattled the whole building.

Mr. Bassi's face went white. "Oh, crap."

He slammed the shutters down. "EVERYBODY OUT NOW!"

I ran after the others—

BOOM!

The roof shattered like glass. White lunar energy slammed into me, sending me hurtling across the room like a ragdoll tossed by a storm. Desks exploded beneath me. Dust and debris choked the air.

I scrambled up, vision hazy.

There he was.

Same height. Purple hoodie draped over broad shoulders, white wings slicing through the smoke, glowing sharp like blades. His tail flicked, scales shimmering purple. His eyes locked onto me—no hesitation, no mercy.

He pointed, voice low but razor-sharp.

"You… One of the Five Chosen Ones. Confident. Relentless. That's why I'm here."

Celestial energy surged around me, crackling violet. "Who are you?!"

Calm, cold, he stepped forward.

"Dark Don. A bounty hunter, Scarrist, a version of you that's better in any way, shape, or form…."

Before I could react, his fist exploded into my face. Pain erupted, and I flew through a bookshelf, splinters tearing at my skin.

But this time, I wasn't just going to take it.

Light violet Celestial energy flared wildly from my arms—lightning lancing through the air.

I shoved off the ground, blocking his next punch mid-air, pushing him back with a violent burst of violet power. My eyes burned fierce light violet.

I swung with everything I had, connecting with his jaw. Dark Don staggered—but only for a heartbeat.

My energy flared bright—I was holding my own.

Five seconds.

Then he vanished in a heartbeat, a blur of lunar grace, and slammed his knee into my gut. Wind knocked out of me, I crumpled. He flung me

down the hallway like I was nothing.

Still crackling with violet sparks, I charged.

Our powers collided—Celestial violet crackling against Lunar white in a violent storm of energy and fury.

Then, with brutal precision, he blasted me with a lunar strike that sent me crashing through the wall into the cafeteria.

That's when chaos exploded.

The side doors slammed open—sirens blaring, lights flashing wildly.

Iris Town PD swarmed in, backed by fire trucks roaring down the street, firefighters leaping into action. Sprays of water hissed as hoses trained on broken beams and small fires spreading near the ceiling.

Kids were everywhere—running, screaming, some frozen in terror, others darting between tables like live wires. The cafeteria turned into a frantic storm of flashing blues and reds, urgent voices, and shattered glass crunching beneath boots.

Stone-horned Bull Hero charged ahead, muscles rippling under cracked brick armor.

Sound Panther Hero's claws flashed with sonic fury, black fur bristling.

Smoke Hyena Hero moved like a shadow, teeth gleaming through swirling mists, laughter low and deadly.

Gorilla Bomb Hero's red-glowing fists pulsed with explosive power.

Shark Water Hero's fins sliced the air, teeth bared like a living tsunami.

"FREEZE! HANDS UP!" Bull Cop bellowed, stomping the ground as concrete spikes erupted beneath him.

Dark Don glanced sideways—unruffled, almost bored—sword resting casually by his side. "More pests."

He advanced on me, steady and lethal, then raised his free hand—

Lunar pulse.

Bull Cop charged, horns down, but Dark Don sliced through concrete spikes like paper.

A lunar punch slammed Bull Cop against the wall.

Sound Panther Hero unleashed sonic claws, roaring.

Dark Don flicked his sword, deflecting blasts with flawless precision,

then backhanded Panther Hero into a table.

Smoke Hyena tossed a mist bomb. Gorilla Bomb Hero hurled two glowing charges.

Irrelevant.

A blink, a Lunar step teleport—one slash of white lunar energy, bombs detonated mid-air in a violent explosion.

Shark Hero tried to catch him off-guard with a tidal blast. Dark Don sidestepped effortlessly, grabbed her arm mid-swing, and slammed her through the floor—crater forming beneath.

Meanwhile, he still held me by the collar—my punches weak, useless.

He caught a violet jab mid-air, crushing my arm until I gasped for breath.

"You're not ready," he said flatly, dragging me through the carnage as heroes and cops fell around us. "Light violet Celestial energy won't save you."

I coughed up blood, violet sparks sputtering.

He lifted me by the shirt, eyes cold as ice. "You lack strength."

"Who… are you?" I gasped.

His lips curved in a faint, merciless smile. "I'm the reckoning."

Before he could say more—

BOOM!

The room exploded in fire and dust.

We were hurled apart—me smashing into the cafeteria wall, stars exploding behind my eyes, violet energy flickering weakly.

When the dust settled, a voice sliced through the chaos:

"We got 'em, Don."

Archie strode forward, flames crackling, confidence solid. Behind him—Olsen, Prince, Demaurion, Ella, and Mr. Bassi—my crew standing tall.

More heroes and cops poured in—

Cementos, the Bull Hero, cracked but relentless.

Lila, Shark Hero, water swirling like a tsunami's wrath.

Smite, Hyena Hero, smoke curling from sharp claws.

Titus, Gorilla Hero, bombs charging with deadly intent.

Nyx, Panther Hero, claws humming with lethal energy.

They lined up, a fortress of determination.

"Alright, Dark Don," Demaurion called, water spiraling. "Time to end this."

Dark Don rose from rubble, wings unfolding wide, eyes blazing with ruthless menace.

My friends shook, energy flickering, exhaustion clear—but they stood their ground.

Mr. Bassi stepped forward, fists clenched, breath steady. "Let's finish this."

Dark Don's face remained unreadable. No taunts. No laughter.

He raised an arm—and a controlled tsunami of white lunar energy blasted outward, sending everyone flying like ragdolls.

Then—dark purple chains snapped out of thin air, wrapping tight around me, Olsen, Prince, Demaurion, and Archie. Lunar energy crackled over the bindings.

Nyx, Lila, Smite, and the others fought to break free—useless.

I flapped my wings, tail igniting with furious rage. "Let us go."

Dark Don met my eyes, steady, unshaken.

A scroll dropped from above, landing at his feet. He bent, picked it up, and read slowly, deliberately.

"Well," he said softly, "the time has come."

"Let us go!" I shouted, violet sparks flickering weakly.

He nodded once. "You will."

Snap.

His fingers cracked.

A black hole tore open at the cafeteria's center—lunar darkness swirling violently, purple energy whipping through the air.

"Don, no!" Mr. Bassi lunged forward.

The hole roared, shaking the entire building.

I grabbed the stair railing, wings beating desperately, fighting to hold on.

Dark Don walked over—calm, cold, like a predator ready to deliver the final blow.

"You have a job to do," he said, eyes sharp as knives. "Now go."

He flicked his finger.

A shockwave slammed into me square in the chest.

I lost my grip.

"No!" I screamed, reaching out as the darkness swallowed me whole—everything fading into purple and black.

CH.2 Welcome to Scarletsville Shenanigans

We slammed face-first into the dirt—hard, rough, jagged. It felt like getting body-slammed by the Earth itself.

"Ugh…" I groaned, pushing myself up slowly. My body ached like I just got uppercutted by a mountain.

I blinked, squinting at the eerie landscape around us. Red rocks. Blistering heat. A burnt orange sky swirling with clouds that half-blocked the sun. The air felt dry and angry. I stumbled forward toward a nearby cliff, dust kicking up with each step. Then I skidded to a halt.

My eyes widened.

Below, glowing molten rivers of lava hissed and bubbled like they were hungry. The whole valley pulsed with heat.

"…Where the hell *are* we?" I muttered.

Then it hit me like a slap: **Dark Don.** That edgy menace with the smug attitude and chaos energy had launched me here. Something-something prophecy. I didn't get it at the time, but now… I was starting to.

Behind me, someone groaned.

Olsen was the first to rise, dust clinging to his green hoodie. He rubbed his head and looked around, frowning. "Okay, what in the *actual* crusty volcano pit is this place?"

Prince zipped in next, followed by Demaurion and Archie, all of them dazed.

Demaurion, of course, was the first to scream.

"YO WHERE THE HELL DID DARK DON SEND US?! THIS LOOKS LIKE SATAN'S BACKYARD!"

"DUMBASS, THIS IS SCARLETSVILLE!" Archie shouted back, hair whipping in the wind, wings twitching with chaos.

Olsen put his hands on his hips like some concerned soccer dad. "Cool. So, we're in a lava-soaked wasteland. Great. What now? And who the heck *was* that Don lookalike?"

I sat down near the edge of the cliff, staring at the lava river like it had answers. "I don't know… He wasn't in any of the Celestianite war records. We only moved to Iris Town recently. I didn't even see the frontlines of the war until I was ten."

I paused, thinking. "But… he said he was from *another universe.* If that's true…"

Prince suddenly appeared beside me, plopping down and casually watching the fantasy birds—orange *Uragas*—fly across the sky. "Hey, at least this place is metal. I mean, it *literally* is. Hot metal. Lava. Cool vibes."

"Now's not the time," Olsen said, arms crossed, full seriousness mode activated.

"Okay, hold up…" I stood, dusting myself off, pacing. My brain raced back to everything that happened at Insane Middle School—teachers screaming, cops and heroes rushing in, Dark Don kicking my butt like I was built out of marshmallows… and that scroll. That freakin' scroll.

Mr. Bassi's words came back to me.

Five chosen ones. Five epic quests. One Lost Key. And the first challenge… *Celestial's Fight.*

My eyes widened. I slowly looked at my friends, then crossed my arms with a smirk.

"The prophecy."

They all blinked at me like I'd just grown a second pair of wings.

"…Excuse me, what?" Prince tilted his head.

"The prophecy," I repeated, stepping forward. "Celestial's Fight. Earth's Might. Lightning's Surge. Water's Murge. Flame's Burns."

I took a breath. "One of us is supposed to complete each challenge. I've

got the Celestial Element… which means I'm up first."

The group looked at each other, slowly nodding like their brains were catching up.

"Ohhhhhhhhhh," they said in unison.

Demaurion deadpanned, "Okay, prophecy stuff aside, how do we *get out* of this burning hellhole before I straight up evaporate?"

I grinned. "C'mon, Leviathan Boy, isn't it obvious?"

I reached into my hoodie pocket and pulled out the *Map of Avangard*—yeah, I brought it to school. I'm built different.

"'Celestial's Fight' means I gotta go toe-to-toe with the deadliest beasts in Avangard. Then we fight King Dreadixz."

I paused.

And then it hit me.

"WAIT. **FIGHT KING DREADIXZ?!?!?!**"

I instantly spiraled. Arms flailing. Pacing in panicked circles.

"WE'RE COOKED! TOASTED! FRIED! WHO THE HELL FIGHTS DREADIXZ ON A TUESDAY?!"

Prince just leaned back with the biggest smirk. "Well, well, well. Guess the big bad dragon doesn't have the balls of titanium after all."

I glared, wings flaring up in irritation. "SAYS THE SHORTER ONE BUILT LIKE A THREE-BY-ONE LEGO PIECE ON LIGHTNING JUICE!"

Olsen stepped between us, doing his best peacemaker impression. "Alright, let's chill. Look, all Don's gotta do is beat the beast. Simple."

"We're inexperienced," Demaurion muttered.

"But we've got guts," Archie said, cracking his knuckles. "That counts."

"Facts," I nodded. "We might not have weapons, but we've got fists, elements, and pure adrenaline. I've fought worse in gym class."

Archie flared his phoenix wings, eyes on the fading sun. "Let's make this quick. I don't do midnight brawls."

That's when it happened.

The metallic *shhhhink* of a sword being drawn echoed through the canyon.

We froze.

A figure stepped out from behind a massive jagged boulder—armor gleaming red and scarred, the air around him shimmering from the heat.

His voice was low, cold, dripping with menace.

"Well, well. Kids playing prophecy."

I stepped forward, violet energy crackling across my arms. "Too early for this crap…"

His armor clanked with every step, scarlet plates dented from ancient battles. His shoulder was lined with jagged spikes, a tattered crimson cape flowing behind him. His sword burned orange and silver, fire swirling around its blade like a living flame.

Through the slits in his mask, his eyes *blazed.*

"King Scar," I said through gritted teeth. "Leader of the Flamenites. Veteran of the Triple Tryple War."

He raised his sword, flames flaring. "Trespassers will burn."

Demaurion cracked his neck with a grin. Olsen stayed silent. Prince and Archie were both trying hard to look badass.

King Scar twirled his sword and sneered, "Isn't it a pleasure to see you? Part of my prophecy… is to kill you all."

His malicious chuckle grew louder, breaking through the howling wind.

"Little innocent kids, dragged here by force… No weapons, barely any experience… You came to fight me? What a joke."

I tried to act tough, but I was sweating bullets inside. My eyes stayed locked on him like I had a plan — but honestly? I had nothing.

Then I remembered why I was here. Why I was chosen to lead. Not just because of who I wanted to be — but all the insecurities, the doubts.

Is this what being a hero feels like? I mean, I'm not a hero yet, but maybe this is what they go through.

Suddenly, confidence snapped into place, puzzle pieces clicking. Celestial energy crackled all over me as I stared down King Scar.

"You… are nothing to me."

Everyone gasped behind me, but when they saw my face, they knew I meant it.

Scar pointed his sword at me. "You just signed your contract to heaven, mister."

I cracked my knuckles, whispering, "And you're about to get sent from Scarletsville to *Get-Your-Ass-Kicked-ville*."

He slashed the air and charged.

"Mock me all you want, but it won't be easy when this blade sinks into you."

Olsen clapped his hands, earth energy surging through his body, ready to fight. Archie conjured fireballs, Demaurion summoned swirling water, and Prince crackled with electricity.

Scar lunged, I ducked, then uppercut him straight into the air. He staggered back.

Prince flashed behind him, swinging a strike — but Scar spun instantly, sword slicing, sending Prince flying.

Scar turned to attack Olsen, but Olsen caught his blade with both hands, then blasted him with fists sparking metal shards into the air.

Archie shot into the sky, flames swirling as he rained fireballs on Scar. Explosions shook the ground, smoke billowing everywhere.

Then it was Prince and my turn. He zipped past, striking Scar's face quick as lightning. I followed, matching his speed and strikes. Flash, strike. Flash, strike. Again and again, faster every time.

When we passed each other on either side of Scar, he grabbed Prince, spun him around, and slammed him into me. We crashed hard onto the ground.

Scar rushed me, sword swinging wildly. I dodged every strike like I was dancing to a beat.

Suddenly, lightning flashed as Prince blasted past Scar again, punching his face so hard it sent him tumbling through the air, crashing to the ground.

Archie, in full Phoenix form, soared above — orange feathers and flames swirling, eyes blazing — diving toward Scar.

Scar raised his sword, charging a flame beam.

CLANG! Olsen tackled him down with raw strength.

As they traded blows, Archie slammed into Scar, causing a massive explosion that nearly shattered the ground.

Olsen stepped back, and Scar grabbed Archie, hurling him across the battlefield. Archie crashed through a jagged red wall, tumbling hard.

Scar rose, sword blazing fury, and dashed toward me. He grabbed my neck and slammed me against a rocky wall. Pain shot through my spine.

I almost screamed, but Scar silenced me, grabbing my head and smashing it into the wall again.

He whispered coldly, "See? Told you… weak as hell."

"WEAK AS HELL, ALRIGHT!" Celestial energy crackled violently around me, my eyes blazing with violet fire. I charged forward, my fist glowing with pure power, and slammed a single celestial punch straight into King Scar's face. The impact sent a violet shockwave tearing through the air, and he slid backward across the scorched ground, finally collapsing far away from me. I pushed off the wall, stepping forward slowly, my eyes burning with fierce determination, my expression deadly serious for once.

Celestial energy surged even stronger, more violently than ever before. This was new—unlike anything I'd felt. If this was what power felt like, then yeah… I was powerful. Everyone else was down, but I stood tall, eyes locked on Scar, who was near the bubbling lava. A flare shot from my eyes as I muttered, "Huh… guess my Element really upgraded. Let's finish this." I sprinted toward him, celestial energy rushing through my veins, arm cocked for a devastating Celestial Uppercut—ready to launch him into the air. Scar dove down toward the lava just as I swung. A loud PLOP! echoed, followed by a scream of agony. Then his furious shout pierced the air: "I'LL GET YOU KIDS!!! YOU LITTLE—BRATS!!!" I exhaled, letting the celestial energy fade away. Turning to my crew, I asked, "Is everyone okay?" They slowly stood up, battered but breathing—just a few bruises and scratches. Olsen gave a thumbs up, and the others nodded their agreement.

"Well," I said, facing them, "guess we keep moving." We pressed onward through the Scarletsville canyon. The heat was relentless, but the wind had

finally died down to a bearable breeze. Above us, the sky burned deep red and orange—as if the sunset itself had frozen in time. The valley was flat and cracked beneath our feet, barren and broken. Massive red mountains loomed, rugged and streaked with veins of molten lava. The river we crossed was nothing but blackened, coal-covered rocks sliding beneath our boots. Molten waterfalls poured from the cliffs like the earth was weeping molten tears. The whole place was a surreal mix of devastation and haunting beauty, frozen in perpetual ruin.

We moved through what was once the Kingdom of Scarletsville—the ruins whispering stories of a proud realm reduced to smoldering ash. Charred debris still burned faintly, some turned to solid black coal by endless flames. A ring of lava marked the boundary between the kingdom's past and this wasteland's present. As the sun dipped below the horizon, shadows stretched long across the land. The fiery sky faded to darkness, and the first stars blinked awake—distant memories scattered across the night.

The crescent moon hung low, casting an eerie silver glow over the desolation. Night swallowed everything, bringing a silence so thick it felt like the earth itself was holding its breath. "I'm starting to think this place is even scarier when the sun's gone," Archie muttered, breaking the quiet. Squinting into the darkness, he added, "It's late, and I'm beat.

How about we find a spot to crash? We can push on fresh tomorrow and tackle the next part of the prophecy." I nodded slowly. "Sounds good. Rest first, then move on." Olsen, always thinking ahead, spotted a small cave nestled into a rocky hillside. Perfect shelter. The cave was pitch black, darker than the night outside. Everyone shifted into their magical beast forms, taking up spots in the cool shadows. I sat at the entrance, folding my wings like a blanket around me. From here, the sky stretched endlessly—a canvas of twinkling stars.

The crescent moon hung like a silent guardian, bathing the world in soft silver light. Olsen, now a massive Rockslide Ankylosaurus, lay on his belly, filling much of the cave's floor. He turned his head toward me, a thoughtful smirk playing on his lips. "You ever notice how Scarletsville

looks kinda beautiful at night, but during the day… it's a whole different story?" "Yeah," I replied. "Like two different worlds. We'll probably find out why tomorrow." I leaned back, wrapping my wings tighter around myself. My tail curled around my waist, warmth radiating as I nestled into the folds. One last glance at the moonlit sky… then sleep took me.

CH.3 Scarletsville Shenanigans

I yawned, stretching out on the rocky ground, my wings snapping back into place behind me like they were auditioning for the world's most dramatic entrance.

Don't even give me that look. Yeah, I sleep with my wings out. It's a Celestianite thing. Saves gold on blankets, alright? Practical AF.

The cave was buzzing with the sound of everyone waking up—and of course, Olsen couldn't just quietly rouse like a normal dude. Nah, my boy yawned so loud the whole cave basically shook like an earthquake.

I shot him a deadpan glare. "For real? You *had* to do that?"

He just shrugged, casually shifting back into his bulky Ankylosaurus form. "Earthnites gotta Earthnite, man."

I peeked outside. The sun was already cooking the sky into that weird red-orange soup again. The heat felt like someone cranked the world's oven to 'molten lava' setting, and the volcanoes rumbled like they were pissed they hadn't had their coffee.

Out there, a bunch of Vexes (skinny four legged beasts with large heads that were curved back and sharp at the tip, no eyes, no nose, just teeth and head) were prowling around like they owned the place.

I grinned. "Guess they're more active when the sun's up. Great."

The squad gathered, bleary-eyed but ready. First mission: escape this molten nightmare and head to the next island.

"Where to?" I asked, pulling out the map and tracing a finger through the chaos.

"South," Olsen said, already squinting at the horizon.

Then—*twotwoot!* My dragon ears twitched twice.

That's bad news. Real bad.

"You guys hear that?" I asked, eyes scanning the smoky horizon.

They all shook their heads. Paranoia levels: maximum.

Then again—*twotwoot!*—and this time I caught it: some ugly screech-roar hybrid noise. Like if a cat and a T-Rex had a screaming contest.

I spun around, tail wagging before I even realized it. "We gotta check this out!"

We trekked across Scarletsville's endless scorched valleys, lava dripping like the world's worst faucet, air thick with smoke and regret.

At the bottom of a steep hill, standing like the final boss in a video game, was a glowing blue figure. Energy crackled off him, eyes glowing with blue energy. He cracked his knuckles like he owned the place—which, honestly, he kinda did.

Prince squinted. "Isn' that Power?"

My brain lit up like fireworks.

That. Is. Power Zenith.

THE Power Zenith.

The legend behind the creation of the Power Gems.

I didn't hesitate.

Grabbed a flat rock like it was a hoverboard and launched down the hill, drifting side to side, kicking up ash like a pro. I backflipped off at the bottom, tossing the board in the air like a boss.

Power turned, smiled, and said, "Well, well. If it isn't Don. Remember me?"

My soul practically exploded. No. Freaking. Way.

POWER Z. The OG hero, the GOAT of Avangard.

I practically tackled him, shaking his hand like I'd found the last slice of pizza.

"It's an honor! I'm your biggest fan! Seriously, you're here—"

Power laughed, scratching his head. "Slow down, kid. Love the energy, but let's keep it PG with the grabbing."

My face went tomato-red. "Right, sorry! Just super hyped."

Olsen snorted from the hill. "Fanboy alert."

Archie raised an eyebrow. "So this guy's the number one hero? You're really into him?"

My tail wagged like a puppy. "Dude saved over a hundred people in the Leviathan raid. Literal GOAT."

Demaurion rolled his eyes. "Cool story, but we've got a prophecy to fulfill."

I sighed, smoke puffing from my nostrils. "True. Let's get to it before more bad guys show up."

Prince studied the map. "Next stop: Gadian Sea. And we're not even close."

"We're south of Scarletsville, near the Pyramids of Markilao," I said, pointing. "That water's our direction."

Back at the cave, Power finally got serious.

"So," I said, "Celestianites and Lunaranites are beefing over the Lost Key. Lunaranites want domination; Celestianites want peace. And we—me, Olsen, Prince, Archie, Demaurion—are supposed to save the world?"

Power nodded. "Yep. It's gonna be a long, nasty fight. No vacation."

He smirked, eyes gleaming. "But I think you kids can handle it."

FIVE MINUTES LATER

For hours.

We trained. No joke. We trained *hard*—muscles screaming, sweat pouring like rivers, and laughs slipping through the cracks like accidental relief from the apocalypse's weight.

Archie was trying to breathe fire without torching his own eyebrows off. Spoiler: he looked like a crispy chicken nugget by the end.

Olsen was grunting like a grizzly bear with a grudge, slamming boulders into the dirt like the world owed him something.

Prince? Dude was basically a human bullet, zipping around so fast even his own shadow struggled to keep up.

Demaurion was over there summoning water with all the finesse of a kid who just learned to pour a glass—accidentally dousing Olsen's face more times than anyone could count.

And me? I was chasing my celestial energy like it was a hyperactive cat hiding in a tree—sometimes I caught it, sometimes I faceplanted, and sometimes I just looked like I was doing an interpretive dance of defeat.

Power watched from a distance, arms crossed, a smirk tugging at his lips. Finally, he walked over, voice booming but calm.

"Alright, Don. Let's talk daggers."

My eyes lit up like I'd just won a free pizza. "Daggers? You mean *these*?" I brandished the pair of sleek, humming Celestial Daggers Power had forged himself.

"Yup. They're your new best friends."

I grinned, imagining myself slicing through enemies like a shadow ninja.

Power's smirk twisted. "But here's the catch: daggers aren't about brute force. It's speed, precision, and control. You've got the speed part down, but your precision? Not so much."

Oof. That hit like a cold bucket of water.

"Okay, wise guy, what do I do then?"

He clapped his hands, and suddenly the clearing filled with glowing blue figures—short, flickering shapes that looked like holograms of some kind.

"Meet the Patriot Shadows. They're tough, fast, and relentless—perfect practice dummies. Your job: slash them all down in 30 seconds."

I stared, heart pounding. Thirty seconds? That was like, zero time.

Power's eyes gleamed. "Ready? Go."

I lunged, daggers flashing, but the Shadows darted and spun like smoke. My strikes were wild and unfocused. I missed more than I hit. Time slipped by, the timer in my head ticking down mercilessly.

Thirty seconds ended. Fail.

Power shook his head. "Again."

Thirty seconds later: fail again.

"Don't get sloppy. Calm your mind, focus your strikes. Precision."

Third time, I started to find a rhythm—daggers slicing through two Shadows, then a quick pivot to hit a third. My strikes grew cleaner, movements tighter.

Power nodded, impressed. "Better."

We ran the drill again and again. The shadows blinked out faster each time. My arms ached, sweat stung my eyes, but I *got* it. Precision wasn't about raw power; it was about *dance*, about moving like you *owned* the space.

"See," Power said, eyes sharp, "daggers demand agility. You've got to be light on your feet, fluid like water."

Agility. That word echoed in my mind.

I thought back to the move I'd loved as a kid—the Wing Jump. Using my wings to boost my jump height, launching myself higher than I should've been able to.

"Show me your Wing Jump," Power said suddenly.

I hesitated, then spread my wings, crouched low, and pushed off the ground. My wings unfurled just right, and I soared higher than I ever had before, feeling power surging through my veins. My body was stronger now, forged by hours of grueling training.

Power nodded approvingly. "Good. Combine that with your dagger work. Speed, precision, and agility all fused."

I grinned, panting but pumped. "So… daggers *and* flying ninja moves? I'm basically unstoppable now, right?"

Power chuckled. "Slow your roll, kid. You're just getting started."

Hours rolled on like this—me practicing dagger strikes, dodging, weaving, slashing Patriot Shadows, jumping higher and moving faster.

I was falling, failing, laughing, sweating, but every time I got up, I was sharper, quicker, *better*.

And the best part? I knew this was just the beginning.

We all went back into the cave mid-day. Training had drained every last drop of sweat and fire from our bodies, but none of us dared relax—not yet.

I stared down at my hands, swirling thoughts locking in place. *Why are they fighting over one thing?*

Olsen shot me a look like I'd lost it. "You serious? Lunaranites want to take over Avangard!"

"No, I mean… why though? What even started all this?"

Power's confident grin faded. He glanced down, voice dipping into something darker. "Alright, time for a little history lesson."

Origin Story of — King Dreadixz

Dreadixz was never meant for ordinary.

From the jump, this guy's hunger for power was like a black hole—pulling everything around him into doubt, fear, and submission. Before anyone even knew his name, he was brawling with every Lunaranite in sight, pushing his unawakened Lunar Element to its limit. He didn't just want strength. He wanted domination. Authority. A crown the stars themselves would kneel to.

They said the Lunar Element could level cities even while dormant—but for Dreadixz? That was weak.

His envy for King Vigilzante was a raging beast clawing inside him. Vigilzante had it all: legacy, worship, the golden throne of Celestia, and the power to rule the balance of the world.

Dreadixz couldn't stand breathing the same air as him—every second in Vigilzante's shadow felt like suffocating in chains. No matter how powerful he became, he was still just a miner from the underworld, clawing through dirt while Vigilzante basked in the light.

Then came the day it all cracked.

After being dismissed by Vigilzante like a worthless speck during a high council meeting, Dreadixz stormed out—teeth clenched, hatred boiling through his bones. And that's when he saw it.

The Lost Key.

Just sitting there on a polished pedestal like some forgotten trinket.

His breath caught. Every legend he'd ever heard screamed in his head—the wish-granting artifact, the source of all Elemental creation, the god spark.

With shaking hands, he grabbed it. Whispered his demand:

"I wish to become a king—powerful enough to dethrone Vigilzante forever."

Light erupted, scorching his vision white. He thought he was ascending.

Becoming more.

Then—nothing.

The Key vanished. Slipped through his fingers like smoke.

At first, he thought it was a joke. But that denial—that rejection from destiny itself—twisted something deep inside.

That hunger rotted into obsession.

Obsession twisted into the ultimate goal:

To rewrite the laws of Avangard and create a world where power is the only rule. No kings. No gods. No balance. Just domination, chaos, and raw elemental rule—under HIM.

He began preaching madness:

That he was already greater than Vigilzante, greater than the Zeniths, greater than even the celestial forces that made the Elements. His voice shook Celestia as he declared himself the rightful ruler of Avangard—the one who would shatter the old world and build a new one from its ashes.

Vigilzante, ever the symbol of balance and peace, had enough.

He exiled Dreadixz without hesitation.

Humiliated, betrayed, and cast into the shadows, Dreadixz fled to Foreshade. But he didn't break.

He evolved.

In the dark, he rallied Lunaranites under a new flag—revenge, freedom, and power.

He told them Vigilzante stole the Key, stole their birthright, denied them everything they could've been.

Whispers became riots. Riots became revolts.

And soon, war erupted.

Dreadixz declared himself king of the Lunaranites—the Shadow Lord—and vowed to tear down the old world, burn the legacy of the Celestianites, and rebuild a realm where power was law.

And then… he did the unthinkable.

In 2013, he killed Vigilzante. With his own hands.

Standing over the dying king, he finally learned the truth:

The Key wasn't gone. It was waiting—hidden, sealed away until five

Chosen Ones rose to claim it again.

That knowledge didn't bring him peace.

It lit a fire inside him so intense, it cracked the stars.

One night, beneath the twin moons, Dreadixz raised his hand to the sky and swore:

"I will find that Key. I will erase the Chosen Ones before they even breathe their fate. And then—I will burn this world to silence. Not to rule it. Not to save it.

But to remake it… in MY image."

Power's voice dropped as he finished. "That's why Dreadixz and the Lunaranites want the Key. Vengeance. Power. Control."

I lowered my gaze. "Dang… I get it now."

Suddenly, the cave trembled. The ground groaned beneath our feet. Rocks rattled and fell around us.

We bolted out, adrenaline snapping through our veins.

From the depths of the canyon, something stirred.

The wind screamed. The earth cracked and split.

"WATCH OUT!" I yelled, leaping back.

Everyone scattered as the ground ruptured, revealing a river of glowing lava below.

Then—oh no.

From the molten river rose a massive lava golem, its rocky body veined with molten orange fire. Its eyes blazed with fury as it let out a monstrous roar—a terrifying blend of T-Rex and Leviathan.

I drew my daggers, heart pounding.

"WHAT THE HECK IS THAT?!" Olsen shouted.

I narrowed my eyes.

"That's Scar. Thought we killed him. Guess we forgot—he can evolve."

The titan loomed over us, bigger than any skyscraper in New York, a living volcano of rage and molten power.

Celestial energy sparked across my skin, crackling like lightning in a storm.

"Let's just hope we survive this fight…" I muttered.

"FIGHT? DON, ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?!" Olsen screeched. "That thing is massive! And we're nowhere near full power!"

I turned, fire blazing in my eyes.

"Olsen… we're the Five Chosen Ones. That means we do whatever it takes to fulfill the prophecy. All of it. If we die, we die. But I'm not backing down. We beat this guy… or we die trying."

Olsen blinked, then smirked. "Then let's kick some magma butt."

Without hesitation, we all launched ourselves at Scar. I whipped out my Celestial Daggers, adrenaline pumping through my veins.

The monster let out a roar so loud it cracked the skies. Then—BOOM—he fired a lava beam straight at us.

I screamed into the wind, determination in every breath. We charged forward—

And just as we reached his arms, he slammed them down like thunder.

But Power was already on it. He flew above me like a meteor and punched the lava right out of Scar's arm! Rocks exploded in every direction. He then zipped to Scar's face like a bullet and landed two massive punches right into his skull. The beast roared in pain.

I launched into the air, wings spread wide, dodging magma blasts like some kind of galactic fly. Olsen slammed his hammer into the ground, triggering a quake.

"NICE ONE!" I shouted from above. But then—WHAM!—Scar grabbed me in one of his massive, crusty lava hands and flung me toward a blazing mountain.

Before I could even yell, Power zoomed in, grabbed me mid-air, spun around, and *yeeted* me like a celestial cannonball.

"GO GET 'EM, BOY!" he yelled.

I landed hard on Scar's arm, the heat nearly cooking me alive. The rocks were huge and hot, and he was about to squash me with the other arm—until Prince flew in, lightning crackling off his wings.

He snagged me with electric tendrils and hurled me toward the beast's face.

I charged up every ounce of energy I had.

"CELESTIAL DEVASTATION!!"

I crashed my fists into Scar's face, unleashing a massive celestial shockwave that made the skies ripple.

Falling fast, I braced for impact—until Archie, in his full Phoenix Beast form, swooped in and caught me on his back.

"Thanks for the lift!" I shouted. He nodded and zoomed past Scar, unloading fireballs like a blazing machine gun.

I stood on his back. "GO!" Archie called. I jumped off and soared with my wings again, landing on Scar's raised arm.

I stabbed my daggers in and started *skiing down his arm like a legend.* Lava burst from his wounds like soda from a shaken bottle. I reached his shoulder and leapt into the air, daggers crossed, celestial energy flaring.

"TAKE THIS!" I slashed through his face like a cosmic shooting star.

Landing on his other arm, I started skiing backwards this time, pulling off a slick drift. "Huh, guess you're not that powerful after all," I smirked.

Then somehow, the beast *flung me off* into the air. I was now falling, flailing my arms as I looked down from the sky.

Then I remembered the chains.

"CELESTIAL CHAINS, ACTIVATE!" I yelled mid-air.

Nothing. I was falling fast, clothes flapping, energy tendrils whipping in the wind.

"JUST AIM AT SOMETHING!" Power shouted.

"HOW DO I AIM?!" I yelled back.

"DUNNO—JUST POINT!"

So I pointed at a mountain. The chains fired like missiles and dragged me to the top. Scar tried swiping at me, but I was too fast.

Standing on the summit, I turned to Scar and—yes—I started dancing.

"Come on, Scarry Scar! You want this?! Shake that tail!"

Scar was NOT amused. He screamed, slapped the mountain, and lava exploded everywhere. I went flying into the air with chunks of molten rock chasing me.

"HELP!" I shouted.

Scar caught me midair and slammed me through a whole mountain.

I tumbled with the collapsing rocks, pain ripping through every bone.

"DON!" Prince yelled.

Olsen rushed over, pulling boulders off me. I was out cold.

Blood everywhere. My tail dimmed to deep blue.

I gasped, "We're in trouble…"

Scar began charging a lava beam at us. A glowing sphere formed in his hands.

"We might as well lose now…"

"WHAT?!" Olsen shouted. "NO! WE'RE NOT GIVING UP!"

He grabbed my shoulder, shaking me.

"Remember what you said?! 'It's do or die!' Well, Don—you promised *do,* not *die.* You've lost again and again—and you still stand up! Why? Because you're YOU! You're the Chosen One! You have the most powerful element! The most insane skills! You are Lens Don Theagene!!!"

I smiled faintly.

"…Right."

Archie lowered me to the ground. I forced myself up, gripping my arm. Energy began to crackle…

I drew my Celestial Daggers tight, took a deep breath, and locked eyes with Scar.

No flashy transformation. Just pure focus and grit.

I charged.

Dodging molten rocks, I danced around his massive claws. My daggers flashed, slicing through cracks in his lava armor. I jabbed and stabbed, weaving through his fiery strikes.

Then I saw my moment.

I leapt up and plunged my dagger deep into his molten face.

Scar screamed—then lost his balance.

With a final push, I sent him *plunging* into the lava river below.

A huge plume of steam and flame shot up, lighting the sky.

The heat rolled over us like a wave.

I dropped to my knees, exhausted but victorious.

My friends gathered around, mouths agape.

Archie finally broke the silence.

"Don… that was… amazing."

I threw my hands up, grinning wide.

"YEAH, I KNOW RIGHT?! I TOOK DOWN MY FIRST ENEMY!"

My tail glowed yellow and wagged like crazy.

"I GOT MY FIRST WIN! I GOT MY FIRST WIN! OH-OH-AH! OH-OH-AH!"

I started dancing like an idiot.

"Doo doo do do do dooo—GOT MY FIRST WIN, YEAH!!"

Olsen smacked his forehead.

"Dude. You almost got cooked."

Prince whistled.

"Okay okay, I ain't gonna lie… that was some anime protagonist stuff, bro."

Archie pulled out the map.

"We're just a few hours from the Gadian Sea Kingdom. Better move before a lava shark shows up."

I raised my fists.

"GADIAN SEA KINGDOM, LET'S GOOOOOOOO!!!"

CH.4 Gadian Sea Ambience

The silver moon hovered above us, casting its dazzling glow across the night sky like it was trying to outshine the stars. And those stars? They were shimmering non-stop, painting the heavens with light while we stood in awe beneath it all. It was pitch black now, so dark I could barely see a thing unless it was right in front of me. We stood at the edge of a towering red cliff, connected to a network of canyons that overlooked the mighty Gadian Sea.

The waves were roaring—wild at first, smashing into each other with powerful crashes—then calmly retreating like they were catching their breath. Fish and dolphins leapt into the air in synchronized bursts of energy, diving back into the churning foam. The water was a blur of white and blue, fizzing like soda as it splashed against itself. It echoed beautifully across the sea.

We all stood there, staring down at the deep, mysterious water. Then Prince, of course, broke the silence. "Alright, so here's the thing… HOW DO WE GET UNDERWATER WITHOUT DROWNING?!" he screeched, clearly panicking while peering into the abyss.

Here's the situation: Demaurion and Power? They're chill. They can breathe underwater like it's Tuesday. I can survive in space—so flex. Olsen's got underground breathing handled. And Prince? He can shatter air pressure with his raw lightning energy. But underwater breathing? Nah. Only Power and Demaurion got that skill set.

Power, the walking cheat code, could probably do anything if he wanted—but even he's got his limits. Demaurion though? Water is his

whole vibe. He literally uses the Water Element and was born in the freaking Gadian Sea. A Leviathan by birth. Dude got sea monster DNA the minute he turned three.

Demaurion suddenly pulled out four glowing coins from a pouch and tossed them at us with a smug grin. "Think fast!"

We all fumbled, caught them, and stared at the shimmering blue glow. Each coin was ocean-deep blue with a carved water droplet logo glowing faintly. A soft liquid glow pulsed inside the engraved lines.

"What are these?" I asked, tilting my head.

"They're called Gais," Demaurion said, not looking at me, eyes locked on the waves. "As long as you're touching one, you can breathe underwater. No time limit."

"Huh," I said, pocketing mine. The others did the same.

Then Demaurion smirked as water started to swirl around his feet. "Now… who's ready to get wet?"

Archie, of course, didn't wait. His fiery Phoenix wings ignited behind him as he leapt off the cliff and cannonballed into the sea, fire trailing before being instantly extinguished. *SPLASH.*

We all exchanged looks. "LET'S GO!" I yelled, launching myself off the cliff like a missile. I dove into the water with a massive splash and instantly felt the shift—it was peaceful. Like floating in a dream.

Underwater, everything changed.

The ocean floor was glowing with radiant coral in every color imaginable—red, pink, yellow, even glowing greens and whites. It looked like an underwater metropolis. Huge dune valleys housed coral-built structures. Ridges shot upward, pierced by thin, smooth stones that formed natural buildings with windows glowing from within. It was surreal—like an entire city breathing beneath the waves.

Schools of fish swam past, dolphins zigzagged playfully, and sharks cruised like guards on patrol. Clownfish peeked out of coral crevices. A hammerhead drifted past me like I wasn't even there. Eels lurked beside the rocky ridge homes, their eyes blinking with eerie calm.

"This… This is beautiful," I whispered, finally touching the ocean floor.

Demaurion stood ahead, arms crossed, eyes soft. "I know, right? I miss this place…"

The others landed with big splashes, staring around in shock and awe. I walked beside Demaurion and nudged him with a smirk. "Didn't know you had a soft side for your hometown. You're usually the guy trying to bite someone's head off—"

"SHUT UP BEFORE I KILL YOU!" he snapped, face bright red.

Still has that short fuse. Classic Demaurion.

Glowing fish danced through the water, illuminating the sea like living lanterns. Pink and blue shells dotted the ground, each one casting a faint shimmer. I looked up, and through the surface of the water, the moon looked impossibly massive—like a divine silver eye watching over us.

"I think everyone's asleep," Olsen said, scanning the deserted cityscape.

He was right. The lights were on, but not a single soul in sight. No movement. Just calm water.

Demaurion raised his arms and formed a sleek dinghy out of water, motioning for us to hop on. We climbed in, and the boat responded with a soft gurgle, beginning to glide forward on its own.

"Take us to Reef City," Demaurion whispered.

And just like that, we were off.

We passed under massive stone arches and swam past intricate coral towers. It was like gliding through a dream. Eventually, we arrived at Reef City—and whoa, it was wild.

The citizens here were literal water beings. Their bodies rippled like liquid statues, cruising along in boats made from polished wood. Some vessels drifted slowly, others sped past in a rush. Massive ridges framed the area, and long, thin rock spires poked from the cliffsides like ribs. Lights flickered in small window-like gaps—homes, maybe.

We traveled deeper into the city, passing through narrow canyons where coral grew from every crevice. Schools of fish swirled above us, turtles napped on ledges, and more underwater life zoomed past.

This place? Yeah, it definitely made the Top 10 list of Beautiful Places in Avangard.

Still… I noticed something. All the civilians were made of water—except Demaurion.

I turned to him, brows raised. "Yo… why are you the only one here with skin?"

He paused. Then answered, voice low but steady.

"Well… My mom went into labor before she could get back to the Gadian Kingdom. We were still on Iris Town's shore after visiting my grandfather. I was… impatient. Kicking like crazy. Acting like her stomach was a jail cell. I forced my way out before we reached the hospital."

I blinked. "So you were born on the shore?"

"Yeah," he nodded. "My parents were pure water-beings. I wasn't. I didn't get a water body—I was born with skin. I was still Oceananite, but… different. Everyone made fun of me. Called me names. I had friends, but during the Flamemanite-Oceananite War, they all—" His voice cracked. "They didn't make it."

He swallowed hard.

"So I made a choice," he said, gripping his trident. "Run from those nightmares… or fight them. And I chose to fight. I *am* Demaurion Payton—the Leviathan boy. And I will become a Hero of Avangard. Not just to fulfill the prophecy, but so no one ever sees me as a freak again."

I smiled. "Keep dreaming, bro. I believe in you."

I leaned back and exhaled. "Y'know… I wanted to be a Hero too. I used to be such a clown. Nobody thought I had what it takes. But now? After being chosen for this prophecy, becoming a Celestianite commander… I finally feel like I matter."

Then—*RRRRRRRRMMMMMMM.*

The water trembled.

Our heads whipped around. A massive cave loomed in the distance, covered in coral and moss. Then… a low, bone-shaking roar echoed through the abyss.

We'd reached the edge of Reef City. It was darker here. The bright blues faded into navy shadows.

I checked the map. My eyes widened.

"We're at the Leviathan Pool," I whispered.

"Can this boat turn around?!" I shouted. But it was too late.

A massive blue tentacle lashed from the depths and *grabbed* the boat. We were flung upward, sky-high, all of us screaming, "AHHHHHHHHHHH-HHHH!"

SPLAAAAAASH!

The boat hit the water again—but before we could breathe, the Leviathan rose.

Its head breached the surface, casting a shadow that swallowed the sea. Its glowing golden eyes stared us down. Mist rolled in. The wind howled. Waves began to churn violently.

"OH GREAT! WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO NOW—FIGHT THIS GUY?!"

It looked like a colossal sea dragon with sharp, clean rows of 100 teeth. Its face was serpentine, covered in sleek scales of stormy blue and purple. Eight enormous cyan tentacles flexed and twitched, each one strong enough to snap our boat in half.

Then came the tsunami—towering, unstoppable.

"WATCH OUT!" I yelled.

Demaurion leapt from the boat and *slashed* the wave in half with a swipe of his arm. Water scattered into mist, sparkling under the moonlight. He now stood on the water, transformed into his Leviathan hybrid form—his tail glistening, his body scarred, but his spirit unshaken.

He raised his trident, glaring down the ancient sea monster. "Come and get me… you Leviathan beast."

CH.5 Sandy Dunys

Demaurion stood on the water, his eyes locked with the Leviathan's glowing yellow gaze. The beast's massive form loomed over him, the dark waters swirling around its immense body. With a deafening roar, the Leviathan unleashed a torrent of power, sending waves crashing into one another.

Demaurion puffed out his cheeks, a small water bubble escaping his nose. "Hmph, the most powerful beast there is in the land… The Leviathan," he muttered to himself. "I think this is one of the worst of Avangard's beasts. You guys go ahead. I'll handle him."

The sea responded, churning with fury as the storm above raged to life. The skies darkened with ominous gray clouds, and the waves grew increasingly violent. Thunder rumbled overhead, followed by a blinding flash of lightning that struck just beside our boat. The sudden jolt sent us flying.

We crashed into the sea beside Demaurion, the waves slamming us in every direction. I shouted over the chaos, "GOOD LUCK, DEMAURION!!!"

But before we could even brace ourselves, a massive tsunami wave, driven by the fierce wind, surged toward us. A second wave, even larger, swallowed the first, tossing our boat high into the air. We were hurled across the vast Gadian Sea, helplessly flying through the storm's chaos.

Miraculously, we landed back in the water, our boat splashing hard into one spot in the middle of the sea. The waves were relentless now, moving faster and fiercer, crashing together with deafening roars. The water below seemed alive, dragging us in every direction as the tide rose

higher with each passing second.

Up. Down. Up. Down. Lightning crackled and thunder boomed, the storm turning violent. I gripped the edge of the boat, feeling it rock violently. "Is everyone okay?!" I called out.

"Yup! I think so!" Archie shouted back.

"I think I'm gonna get seasick," Prince groaned weakly, his face turning an unsettling shade of green. A moment later, he threw up over the side of the boat. But before anyone could react, another wave swept us up and tossed us again.

Water surged around us, waves crashing violently together as the storm raged on. The wind howled across the sea, sending the boat into a frenzy of motion. Each wave was stronger than the last, rocking us side to side, up and down. Then, a flash of lightning struck just behind us, the force of it throwing us out of the boat entirely.

I flailed in the water, my arms flapping frantically. "OH, SHOOT! WE'RE GONNA DROWN!" I yelled, the chaos spinning around me.

As I was submerged in the icy water, my heart pounded. Holding my breath, I panicked and kicked, trying to surface. But the waves kept pushing me deeper, spinning me out of control.

Now, there's good news and bad news.

The good news is that I'm pretty good at holding my breath. The bad news? I don't know how to swim. And the salty sea was blinding me, making it impossible to see clearly. The water was dark, a swirling blue abyss, and I kept blinking rapidly as waves pummeled me from every side.

A massive tsunami wave surged underneath me, and before I could do anything, it engulfed me. The power of the wave swept me through the water like a ragdoll. I couldn't control my body, couldn't find a way to swim or breathe. The force pulled me under as the wave crashed with explosive force.

I opened my mouth, desperate for air, but that only made things worse. Water flooded in, and panic surged as I slammed my mouth shut, my eyes squeezed tightly.

The current continued to drag me down. I couldn't find anyone. I didn't

know which way was up or down. My body twisted helplessly in the water, tossed about by the storm's fury.

"PRINCE! OLSEN! ARCHIE! POWER?! ARE YOU GUYS THERE?!" I screamed, my voice hoarse against the roar of the storm.

I opened my mouth to shout again, but the ocean responded, swallowing my words as water rushed into my mouth.

A final wave slammed into me, pulling me back beneath the surface. I closed my eyes again, feeling my body sinking deeper, heavier, and colder with every passing second. My movements slowed, and soon, I was still, floating aimlessly. A tiny bubble escaped from my nose as I drifted further under the water.

And then… everything went black.

A Few Hours Later…

Faint voices echoed in the distance, gradually pulling me from unconsciousness. It felt like I was sitting on something soft, though my mind was too fuzzy to make sense of it at first. The voices murmured:

"Is he gonna be alright?"

"Just wake up already, man!"

"Give him some space."

I heard another voice, stronger and more commanding:

"Alright, back up, guys. He's waking up."

I slowly blinked my eyes open, and the first thing I realized was that I was somewhere completely unfamiliar. The air was heavy with dust, and the harsh wind whipped it around like a constant force. I tried to sit up, feeling a slight ache in my body. Looking around, I realized I was lying on the ground of the Sand Dunes—a vast, dusty expanse with towering sand dunes that had shifted through the ages. The sky was completely obscured by swirling sandy brown dust, casting everything in a pale, bright light. It felt like I'd been transported to some distant planet.

I turned my gaze to my arm, where I noticed a neatly wrapped bandage. Looking up, I saw Olsen, Prince, Demaurion, Archie, and Power—along with someone I wasn't expecting to see:

- **Ella** — Sand Elemental Dunanite
- *Smart, acts like the mom everyone needs. Always on top of things, practical and steady.*

She peered down at me, her expression a mix of concern and curiosity.

"You okay?" she asked, her voice soft.

I pushed myself up, dusting off my clothes. "Yeah, I'm fine," I said, though I couldn't help but glance at the bandage on my arm again.

Ella wore a brown mask that covered her mouth, a feature that matched her Desert Cat heritage—yellowish-brown fluffy ears and a tail swaying behind her. She was dressed in a brown jacket over a light brown shirt.

"You did this?" I asked, referring to the bandage.

She nodded. "Yeah. I saw you were hurt after you… well, after you nearly drowned. There was a stick that did some damage to your arm."

"Thanks," I said, appreciating her help.

Ella gave a small giggle. "Now, how about we head back to the Pyramids of Markilao and get some rest?"

"Yeah, sure," I agreed, following the group as we began our trek across the dunes. The wind swept across the sand, but the movement was gentle, almost like it was a part of the desert itself. The sand beneath our feet made the most satisfying sound as we walked—like soft, crunching snow. Each step created a brief echo before the sound faded away, only to repeat with the next step.

"So, one of the most powerful Elementanites, huh?" Ella said, breaking the silence.

"Gee, thanks. I didn't know that," I replied, half-joking.

She continued, "I mean, it's fascinating how you guys adapt. Like how you use your wings as a blanket or sleep like a bat. And your tail—it changes color based on your emotions. That's pretty unique."

I chuckled at the thought, realizing just how different Celestianites must seem to others. "Yeah, we're a pretty interesting bunch," I muttered to myself.

"Have you ever been to the Sand Dunes before?" she asked, her head

tilting slightly.

I scratched the back of my head. "Not really… I only know about it from the CL War."

Ella's expression turned thoughtful. "I'm still kinda freaked out about that Dark Don guy. Where did he even come from, and why is he after you?"

"I don't know," I admitted, shaking my head. "But I think he just wants to be my rival or something. It's not anything too serious."

That's when Ella glanced up at my wings, noticing something that I hadn't even realized. "Hey, where did your scales go?"

I looked down at my wings, surprised by how smooth they had become. "Oh, those scales? I lost them in a battle with King Scar," I explained, brushing off the thought.

After a few more hours of walking through the dunes, we finally reached the Pyramids of Markilao. The five massive pyramids towered over the landscape, spread out in the distance like ancient sentinels.

Ella smirked. "Let's go in, shall we?"

We entered the central pyramid, and I was immediately struck by how incredible it looked. The walls were made of sand bricks, and the floor was covered with rectangular tiles, some of which were dusted with sand. At the center, there was a huge table crafted entirely from sand, surrounded by sand couches on the far side. A large, ornate light hung from the apex of the pyramid, casting a warm glow throughout the space. The walls were decorated with fossils—remains of ancient Celestianites and Lunaranites who had fought here long ago.

"So, what exactly are we doing here?" Prince asked, eyeing the surroundings.

"We're here because this is the perfect place to train you guys," Power answered, a smirk playing at the corners of his lips. "I'm going to train all five of you—Don, Olsen, Prince, Demaurion, and Archie—how to become official warriors. This is gonna take three days, and by the end of it, you'll all be true heroes."

My eyes widened in excitement. Did I hear that right? A training arc…

with *THE Power*? I was about to burst with energy.

"Oh, this is gonna be GREAT!" Olsen shouted, equally hyped.

Power chuckled. "Alright, alright, calm down, you kids." But before he could finish, I gave him an impromptu hug, my tail glowing bright yellow with joy.

Power pushed me away, shaking his head. "Yeah, yeah, alright. Let's get to work."

Day 1

The first day of training was brutal. Power had us do physical exercises to test our strength, and it was nothing short of *hell*. We had to lift heavy weights and do at least 50 push-ups in five minutes. Olsen, of course, crushed it—not because he was fast, but because he was ridiculously strong. He lifted twice the weight we were supposed to handle without breaking a sweat.

I was strong too—I managed the weight without much trouble. But Prince? Well, he struggled. Demaurion, fueled by anger, powered through the exercise like it was nothing, while Archie… yeah, let's just say he wasn't faring much better than Prince.

I did five reps, but Olsen—Olsen did a ridiculous 60. I felt a twinge of jealousy.

Power scanned our stats after the exercise:

- **Don**: Stamina 50%, Strength 30%, Speed 80%, Durability 50%.
-
- **Olsen**: Strength 100%, Stamina 100%, Speed 45%, Durability 50%.
-
- **Prince**: Strength 25%, Speed 100%, Stamina Infinite, Durability 29%.
-
- **Demaurion**: Strength 29%, Speed 60%, Stamina 35%, Durability 30%.
-
- **Archie**: Strength 15%, Speed 20%, Stamina 16%, Durability 18%.

•

"Archie, you're gonna need to work harder," Power muttered, before pushing us through more intense exercises. By the end of the day, we'd all improved—especially me. My strength shot up to 92%, and even Olsen's got an increase, pushing his strength to 110%.

Day 2

The second day was all about speed and reaction time. We tested our speed outside, running across the sand. Olsen failed due to his lack of speed, though he still pushed through. Prince and Archie passed, though Archie's success surprised me considering his element wasn't exactly designed for speed. Demaurion struggled too, but he got better with time.

When it was my turn, I passed easily. My Celestial abilities had made me faster than ever, even more so than when I fought King Scar.

Later, Power tested our reaction times with a fake valorent gun, and as usual, I passed. My dragon instincts kicked in, and I dodged the shot before it even got close.

Day 3

The final day was the most exciting: learning to use our Elemental abilities. Power explained that our Elements weren't just for combat—they were for survival too. Each of us had a unique fighting style that we could combine with our powers to enhance our abilities.

"Movesets are key," Power said, after explaining how gladiators use them in battle. "Mastering a moveset could make all the difference in a fight."

I was practically vibrating with excitement. The idea of creating my own moveset? That sounded like the next step in becoming a real hero.

As the day ended, the sun set over the dunes. The sky darkened, the stars began to twinkle, and the moon cast its silvery glow over the land. Inside

the pyramid, the lights went out, and Ella, who had been silently watching, likely turned them off. The crickets and snakes made their noises outside, and I found myself flying up to a handlebar that stretched across the room. I hung upside down, looking down at my friends in the dim light, their figures silhouetted against the darkening sky.

Ella had already prepared sleeping bags for everyone, and the peaceful quiet of the night washed over me.

I had a feeling that the next few days were going to change everything.

CH.6 Getting Prepared

I woke up and looked down from my perch. Everyone else was already up. Guess I overslept again.

Sunlight poured through the entrance, casting golden beams onto the floor. The sky outside was a flawless blue, glowing with the sun's radiant energy. The clouds drifted by — fast, but peacefully. Tumbleweeds rolled across the tall, thick sand dunes, and the wind whooshed like usual, rushing past with a familiar hum.

I unfolded my dragon wings and glided gently back down to the ground, landing with a soft thud on my feet.

Ella and Power were at the table, casually munching on breakfast. The others? Already outside, deep in training mode.

I stepped through the doorway and spotted them, each locked in their own element-honed battle routines. Lemme break down what I saw:

Olsen's Earth Moveset

- **Seismic Smash**: He slams the ground with raw force, sending out a shockwave that could wreck everything in his path.
-
- **Rolling Smash**: He stomps the ground, launching a boulder into the air, then spin-kicks it straight at the enemy like a meteor.
-
- **Spiky Ground**: A quick punch creates five massive, jagged rock spikes jutting up from the ground.
-

- **Earth Pillar**: His arm transforms into a rocky pillar, extending like a battering ram to strike from a distance.
-
- **Insane Collateral Damage**: Olsen wraps himself in earth armor, then triggers a quake that erupts with 30 tightly packed earth spikes all around him.
-

Prince's Lightning Moveset

- **Electrical Charge**: He lunges forward, electricity crackling as he delivers a thunderclap punch that leaves a shockwave behind.
-
- **500 Volts**: Charging up, he zips in with a blur of punches, dashes around the opponent, and ends it with a hurricane kick that explodes on contact.
-
- **10,000 Volts**: A massive lightning beam erupts from his hands, leveling anything caught in its path.
-
- **Fry**: He drains electricity from nearby sources, then blitzes around the opponent, forming a lightning vortex before sending them sky-high — and axe-kicking them back down.
-
- **3.5 Million Volts**: He condenses a huge ball of lightning in his hand and slams it down, sending out a frying shockwave that can roast any limb used to launch it.
-

Demaurion's Water Moveset

- **Tidal Beam**: A focused water beam with pressure that adapts — weak when he's tired, brutal when he's fired up.

-
- **Flood**: A massive water vortex crashes down, slamming and potentially crushing his target with sheer weight and pressure.
-
- **Tidal Slash**: A high-pressure water slash sharp enough to cut through solid rock.
-
- **Tsunami Wave**: He summons a devastating wall of water capable of obliterating anything in its path — and drowning the careless.
-
- **Water Domain**: Demaurion submerges the area in an illusion-like underwater world, pulling enemies into a drowning battlefield.
-

Archie's Fire Moveset

- **Burning Fireball**: A soccer ball-sized flame projectile, sizzling with power.
-
- **Burning Boom**: He claps his flaming fists together, creating a burst of fire that incinerates everything in front of him.
-
- **Fire Beam**: A continuous stream of fire that detonates on impact.
-
- **Flaming Gauntlets**: Fire-forged gauntlets boost his melee attacks to scorching levels.
-
- **Blazing Hell**: He forms a gigantic fireball in his hands and slams it down, triggering a fiery explosion that devours the battlefield.
-

My (Don's) Celestial Moveset

- **Spin Drop**: Mid-air, I spin into a celestial vortex and crash down with explosive force.
- **Celestial Uppercut**: My fists glow with energy as I unleash a rising uppercut that detonates on contact.
- **50-50-50 Celestial Dropkick**: I power up, teleport around randomly, and launch a brutal dropkick — double-footed and devastating.
- **Celestial Bash**: I toss the enemy skyward, teleport above, and hammer them with a fistful of celestial fury.
- **Blinding Destruction**: I clap, flashbang the opponent, summon 10 mirrors, and phase into pure energy — bouncing mirror to mirror at light speed before smashing their face and shattering the mirrors in one blazing punch.

"Yo, morning y'all! How's it going?" I waved as I walked over.

Olsen turned after finishing his Seismic Smash and grinned. "Good! You?"

"Chillin'. Kinda can't believe we're actually training with *THE* Power Z though."

Demaurion sliced through a cactus with Tidal Slash. "Who knows… maybe one day we'll be the next Heroes of Avangard. All thanks to this guy."

I flopped down into the sand and looked up at the blazing sun. Hot as ever — even with the wind whistling past my ears, the heat was no joke. Still, something about the way the tumbleweeds rolled and the sunlight poured onto me… it felt peaceful. Kinda like those calm mornings back in Iris Town.

I stood up, stretched a bit, and started practicing.

The **50-50-50 Celestial Dropkick** was still tricky. The timing, the

teleporting, the double-footed madness — yeah, it was a beast.

Celestial Bash took a while too. The teleporting alone made it a pain to nail, but I eventually got the rhythm.

Blinding Destruction? *Bro.* That one was a full workout. Clapping my hands? Easy. Transforming into celestial energy? Cake. Moving faster than light? Strangely doable. But *timing* that final punch? Tough as hell.

Still, I kept grinding. Punches, jabs, spin kicks — even threw a few backhands at Casper for practice. Every time my body lit up with celestial crackles, I knew I was leveling up.

After hours of straight-up cosmic training, I started getting the hang of it. I kept going until I mastered them all.

Then, just as the sun began to shift in the sky, Power and Ella stepped out of the pyramid.

Power's blue aura sparked like a live wire as he cracked his knuckles and said, "Alright guys — today's the day you get to fight… *me.*"

Everyone lost it.

Prince got so hyped he accidentally zapped Olsen.

Power just smirked as he stepped forward, fists clenched, energy sizzling in the air around him.

"So… who's going first?"

At Foreshade

It was a dark and stormy night.

Werewolves howled in the distance, their voices slicing through the air like lightning. The silver moon glowed fiercely above, but even its light couldn't pierce the black, suffocating gloom that blanketed the land.

The very air shimmered with shards of dark glass, as if reality itself had cracked. A kingdom of towering black structures loomed across the landscape, each one pulsing with an eerie purple aura. Fog—thick, jet-black, and suffocating—crawled through every crevice.

At the center of it all stood the castle of **King Dreadixz**—a spindly, monstrous tower surrounded by other looming structures, like skeletal fingers reaching for the void. Beyond it stretched jagged black mountains

and bleak valleys carved from rock, drenched in silence so deep it felt alive.

Only the wolves dared make a sound.

Four massive bridges of dark stone stretched from each corner of the castle, connecting to the surrounding cliffs. But only one—ancient and crumbling—led directly to the **Entrance of the Dead**.

Through the portcullis, the castle's interior was pure nightmare fuel.

A throne of black stone sat in the center of a grand, dim hall, outlined in sinister violet. Pillars of obsidian stood like sentinels, each topped with raging violet flames. Skulls littered the floor, some piled high like offerings, others scattered carelessly—recent trophies, perhaps.

Behind the throne, a tattered purple banner hung like a shadow. On it: a crescent moon, white as bone.

A medieval red carpet stretched across the floor, lined with golden trim. Stained glass windows—black and purple, diamond-shaped—lined the walls on both sides, casting strange fractured light into the darkness.

Seated on the throne was **King Dreadixz**—once a miner, now a monstrous king intoxicated by power. His tattered purple cape swayed with a life of its own. He wore black samurai armor, polished like obsidian, though no helmet adorned his head. Instead, a jagged stone mask covered one eye, the other burning faintly with lunar energy. The mask was forged from pure stone, carved with sharp ridges and soaked in lunar darkness.

From his back unfurled massive, sharpened black dragon wings. His tail—long, barbed, and menacing—coiled at his side like a serpent ready to strike.

A knock echoed from the castle gates.

"Enter…" Dreadixz said, his voice like gravel soaked in poison.

The gates creaked open.

Dark Don stepped into the room, his presence like a chill crawling across the skin. His metal-plated shoes clicked ominously against the stone floor as he approached the throne. He gave a low bow.

"Master," he began, "I've served loyally as your second-in-command, and I remain honored. But I bring grave news. The five children… they

are the Chosen Ones. If they locate the *Lost Key*, we'll lose any chance of dominating this world."

He paused, then raised his hand.

"That's why I've brought this to you… The Black Power Gem—also known as the **Incarceration Gem**."

From his hood, he revealed a gleaming gem pulsing with dark energy. Shadows swirled around it, twisting and writhing like spirits trying to escape.

Dreadixz stood slowly, his eyes glowing with cruel delight.

"Ah… yes," he said. "You, Dark Don, have never failed me. So loyal. So wicked. So perfect…"

He stepped down from the throne and took the gem telekinetically, drawing it into his palm as if gravity itself obeyed him.

"Perhaps, when I pass into the afterlife… *you* may take my place."

Dark Don bowed again. "I accept the honor, King Dreadixz."

Dreadixz turned the gem in his hand, examining it with cold reverence.

"This gem… it doesn't serve its wielder. It consumes them. Unstoppable. Beautiful. Destructive. Shame that Incarceration Z is still loyal to the Zeniths… but I have my own party-crasher."

He turned toward the entrance.

"**OVERBRAWL!**"

A red-orange glow filled the room as **Overbrawl** stepped inside.

His body radiated chaos—literally. Red and orange energy pulsed around him like living flame. His eyes burned with untamed fury. A tattered red scarf whipped behind him, trailing sparks with each step.

Dark Don smirked.

"You've chosen wisely, my king," he said, eyes on the new arrival. "Overbrawl was once one of Power's greatest rivals. Defeated, yes—but never outmatched. His Element is Chaos itself."

Overbrawl glared up at Dreadixz, chaotic energy flashing in his pupils like stormlight.

"You summoned me?" he said, voice low and dangerous. "If this is a waste of time, I'll kill you where you sit. Ten seconds. No more."

Dreadixz sneered, then turned to Dark Don with a sigh of disgust.

Overbrawl didn't respect Dreadixz—not one bit. But he obeyed… as long as the gold kept flowing.

Dreadixz shot him a venomous glare. "When will you learn to *kneel* before your king?"

"I don't kneel for overgrown dragon tyrants," Overbrawl snapped. "I don't care about your war. I care about gold. You got a mission, then give it. If not, I'm out."

Dreadixz let out a slow breath.

"I do have a mission," he said coldly. "Find the Chosen Ones… and eliminate them."

At the Sand Dunes

"Come and get me!" Power shouted, crackling with radiant energy.

I smirked as celestial sparks lit up around me. "BET."

He rocketed toward me, fist cocked. I dodged the first punch, but he grabbed me mid-move and hurled me across the sand like I was nothing. I tumbled, rolled, and braced as he sprinted after me, launching a barrage of punches—left hooks, right hooks, overhands—like a machine on overdrive.

I flipped back, dodging strike after strike, and retaliated with a flurry of celestial punches to his chest. He blocked each one with his arms, the impacts lighting up the air between us.

Then he swung again—I ducked under and launched a **flash kick** straight to his chin. He went *flying*, crashing back down in a blue shockwave.

I blocked the blast, but before I could move, he was already midair, flipping and kicking with insane speed. Each hit kept me suspended like I was part of a deadly juggling act. Then—BAM—he teleported above me and dropkicked me straight down.

I hit the sand and rolled, but I wasn't done. I bolted up, launched a **Spin Drop** that spiraled him into the air, then zipped behind him and landed a **celestial punch** right to his face.

He skidded back hard, but teleported again—*pop!*—right in front of me. He pointed a finger like a gun and shot out glowing energy bullets. I

dodged every single one, slipping between them like I was born for this.

We clashed again—punches, kicks, energy blasts. No breaks. No time to think. Just pure instinct.

He went for a leg sweep—I jumped, flipped, and kicked him right in the face mid-air. When he charged again, I grabbed his arm, spun him like a Beyblade, and yeeted him back across the dunes.

I didn't let up. I blasted forward and hit him with a **20-20-20 Celestial DROPKICK** to the face. He soared through the air, and when he landed, a burst of blue energy exploded out of him.

I dashed in, grabbed his legs, and *threw* him up like he weighed nothing. I followed with a **Celestial Uppercut**, launching him higher, then teleported above and slammed him down with a **Celestial Bash**.

The impact shook the ground.

As he hit, I sprinted toward him, a **celestial punch** locked and loaded. When it landed—**BOOM**—a shockwave rippled through the dunes.

I drew my daggers and charged, slashing fast and wild. He dodged every single strike like a phantom, then burst forward with a punch of his own.

I blocked, twisted, got behind him, and slashed at his throat—not to kill, but to throw him off balance—then grabbed his arm and *body slammed* him into the sand.

He got up fast, grabbed *my* neck this time, and drove me into the ground, firing a **radiant blue energy beam** point-blank.

I got blasted back, skidding through the sand. My body buzzed with pain, but my energy sparked stronger. I zipped forward, surrounded by celestial light, and met him head-on.

He threw punches. I dodged. He did a full-on air flare spin—I backflipped out of the way, landing with fists clenched.

"Come on!" I shouted.

"Great reaction time!" Power said, smirking, charging up again.

He blurred toward me, flipping, kicking—a total acrobatic frenzy. I slipped around him, ducked, dodged, and got behind him again.

Left hook. Right hook. Forward backhand.

He tumbled across the sand, dust exploding behind him. I jumped on his

back like I was catching a piggyback ride and *whack whack whack*—daggers banging against his head.

He flung me off. I transformed into raw celestial energy, moving faster than light, hitting from every direction.

Uppercut. Bash. Down slam.

"Confusion—I like it!" Power shouted as he got wrecked.

He crashed into the sand, and I zoomed in, kicking his arm before stopping just in time.

We locked eyes. He ran at me. I boosted forward.

We both powered up—**violet vs. blue**.

He went for an underpunch. I leaped for an axe kick.

BOOM. A massive explosion of color shook the dunes.

We crashed to the ground, both out of breath. He looked at me and smirked.

"Nice job. Didn't expect that from you," Power admitted.

I smiled, pulling myself up. "I expected *a lot* from you though."

We both laughed. The sky had dimmed while we fought. Stars shimmered. The moon glowed silver. Wind whispered across the dunes, and crickets chirped softly.

I turned toward the pyramid. Its lights were on. I sat down on the sand to stargaze. Power walked back toward the pyramid in silence. "Whatcha doing?" she asked, her gaze turning to meet mine.

"Just enjoying the sky," I replied, still staring up at the stars.

She let out a light laugh. "You Celestianites are really something."

I smirked. "Yeah, I guess we are. What about Dunanites? I'm pretty curious about you guys."

"Oh, us?" she grinned. "There's *so* much I could tell you! We love desserts, playing in the sand, Desert Cats love yarn, we don't have wars anymore, we're peaceful, kind, always having fun… basically, we're the nicest Elementalnites in all of Avangard!"

But then, just like that, her smile faded into a quiet frown.

I glanced over, concern creeping into my voice. "Is something wrong?"

She looked down. "No, it's just… I wish they were still alive."

My heart paused. "What do you mean? Aren't the Dunanites supposed to be the happy ones?"

"Well… half of our tribe is gone. When I said we don't have wars, I meant *now*. Back then, during the Celestianite and Lunaranite War at the Pyramids of Markilao… everyone vanished. I was born in the Sand Dunes, and by then, barely anyone was left. Just me and my mom."

She paused, her voice quieter.

"Then the Lunaranites came. They raided the Sand Dunes and the Pyramids… and they took my mother. Dragged her off to Foreshade. They kept her locked away and gave her a few years—just a few—to tell them where the Power Gems were. She was the first Power Gem wielder, chosen by the Zeniths to guard them. She used them to protect our homeland. And then… she was gone."

She lifted her eyes back to the sky, her expression fierce with purpose.

"Since then, I've wanted to save her. That's why when I got my first Element—Sand—I started training. I swore I wouldn't leave until I was ready. But once I am… I'll go after her. I'll bring her back. And when I do, I'll be known as one of the Heroes of Avangard."

I looked at her, smiling, then returned my eyes to the stars.

"You know… I'm trying to be a Hero of Avangard too. Once we take down King Dreadixz, I'll lead the Celestianites to victory. That's my biggest dream. I want it so bad… just to prove I'm not some little weakling. I *know* it'll be a long road, but…"

I trailed off, watching the stars flicker like little promises.

Ella looked down, then turned toward me. "Do you really think you can?"

I met her eyes. "I *know* I can."

"I'll try my best too…"

She looked back up. "Yeah, right. Don, just… don't give up, okay? Don't let people or life drag you down, no matter how hard it gets. I believe in you. You've got this."

"Yup. Thanks." I stood up, brushing the sand off my jeans. "I'm gonna go spar with Power real quick."

CH.7 The Insane Raid

12:00 AM. Midnight.

And we're *already* sprinting through the dark Sand Dunes like it's some kind of nightmare.

Why, you ask?

Oh, no big deal—**JUST THAT 40 LUNARANITE DRAGONS ARE RAIDING THE PLACE!**

"WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?!" Olsen shouted, practically losing his mind.

"I DON'T KNOW, BUT POWER'S DEALING WITH IT!" I shouted back, barely hearing myself over the chaos.

Behind us, meteors lit up the sky, slamming into the ground with thunderous explosions. The shockwaves rattled the sand beneath our feet. We didn't stop. We couldn't.

The wind howled like a beast, whipping up massive dust storms that made it hard to see more than a few feet ahead.

I gripped my dagger tight—no way I was letting a Lunaranite sneak up on us. And like fate was mocking me, one did. Through the swirling dust stepped a Lunaranite, spear in hand, eyes glowing.

We screamed. I didn't hesitate. One clean slash to the throat—blood sprayed, and the creature dropped.

We kept running. The sand grew steeper, the wind harsher.

And through it all, I couldn't stop thinking—

Where was Demaurion?

He'd gone ahead after we crashed for the night—off to fight the

Leviathan.

Meanwhile, the attackers here were no joke: Dark Don, Power's rival Overbrawl, and forty Lunaranite warriors.

Then—BOOM. A beam of light sliced through the sky.

Descending through the clouds were warriors—**Celestianites**. Feathers gold and white, spears glowing with light energy. They glided like angels. And at the center was their leader.

A hundred of them. A hundred. Reinforcements. We had hope.

The leader shouted, "GET OUT OF HERE, KIDS! THIS IS DANGEROUS!"

We froze. I looked back.

Half of the Lunaranites Power had been fighting were now charging **straight at us**, spears ready.

The Celestianites swooped in, colliding with the Lunaranites mid-air.

It was *chaos incarnate*—blades clashed, bodies collided, blood sprayed. War had returned.

"THANKS!" Ella shouted as we turned to flee.

One of the Celestianites tossed something toward us—a golden and white coin. I caught it.

"What is this for?" I asked, baffled.

A soldier hollered, "JUST THINK OF WHERE YOU WANNA GO AND THROW IT! PICK SOMEWHERE SAFE!"

I stared at the coin, mind racing.

Thunderstark Kingdom to fight the next beast?

The Gadian Sea to help Demaurion handle the Leviathan?

Or… vanish somewhere far from this war?

Olsen pointed and yelled, "THUNDERSTARK KINGDOM! IT'S SAFE—AS LONG AS WE DON'T TOUCH ELECTRICITY!"

Good enough. I spun on my heel, clenched my jaw, and hurled the coin.

It spiraled through the air, and—BOOM—a golden vortex tore open, revealing the Thunderstark skyline crackling in the distance.

But then—

I saw him.

Dark Don.

Charging at us like a launched missile, speed absurd.

"GO! GET IN! I'LL HANDLE HIM!" I shouted, pulling out my second dagger.

Prince's eyes widened. "BUT DON, IT'S NOT WORTH IT! YOU GOTTA COME!"

"JUST GO!" I barked.

They dove through the portal, and I turned back, planting my feet on the scorched ground. My irises shimmered violet, radiating power.

Dark Don lunged. I pivoted and kicked him aside, spinning upright with both blades drawn.

"Don't waste my time, Dark Don. I've got places to be," I growled.

He grinned like the devil. "Thunderstark Kingdom? We'll follow you there."

His Lunar Sword hissed as he drew it. We locked eyes—pure tension.

"You ready?" he asked, his aura fizzing with lunar static.

I narrowed my gaze. "Born ready."

He launched the first strike—twisting into a slash. I ducked and swung into a spinning kick that cracked across his skull. He reeled, and I darted behind him, carving across his ribs.

I blurred—blows flying from every angle—but his blade caught most of them.

Sparks lit the air as steel met steel. I zig-zagged around him, nicking his jaw, then sweeping behind to go for his knees. I dropped low—**Spin Drop**—my signature move flung him backward like a ragdoll.

"COME ON!" I roared, leaping in. He raised his sword just in time to block. He shoved me back, snarled, and swiped for my throat.

I intercepted with a dagger—but he slammed a lunar-charged punch into my face.

I tumbled, skidding across the battlefield and slamming into a boulder. Debris burst around me.

Suddenly, he warped ahead and slapped me across the jaw like I owed him money.

We circled, breathing heavy.

"You're strong," he muttered, eyes sharp.

"I've always been strong," I snapped.

He tilted his head. "Where's that confidence come from?"

I grinned. "I believe in myself. You should try it sometime."

I dashed forward, flinging a dagger—he sidestepped—so I lunged in and **Celestial PUNCHED** him square in the face.

The impact blasted him backward like he got hit by a meteor.

I pressed the assault—slashes slicing air. He countered, I parried. I spun, struck, dodged, struck again. Blade to blade. Speed vs savagery.

Roundhouse—miss. Backhand slash—parried.

I feinted, spun low, and nicked his lip clean.

Then I went **full light-speed mode**—blinking around him like a glitch in reality. He couldn't keep up.

SLASH—right across his chest.

"RAHH!" I bellowed.

I chucked a dagger—he deflected—so I lunged with the other and shattered his sword in a single cross-strike.

Weaponless now, he staggered. I jumped, heel-kicked him skyward, then blinked above him and dropped a **Celestial Slam** straight to the spine.

He hit the ground like thunder.

Then came the **50-50-50 Celestial Dropkick.**

He crumpled, coughing up blood, dazed.

I eyed my twin daggers—glinting red in the moonlight.

"Time to say goodbye to that arm," I muttered.

His pupils shrank.

I bolted forward.

FLASH—SLICE!

His arm hit the dirt. Blood sprayed.

He gawked in disbelief—then vanished in a flicker of dark light. Gone.

Just like that.

I turned to see Power throwing hands with Overbrawl while the Celestianites clashed in full force against the Lunaranites.

And oh yeah—we were winning. Hard.

I stretched, popped my knuckles, and smirked.

"Time to clean house."

My eyes lit up, crackling with violet rage, and I sprinted straight into the warzone. The wind shrieked around me, but my battle cry was louder.

Power caught my eye and grinned just as the Lunaranites swarmed.

I clutched my daggers and dove into the madness—cutting, flipping, and carving through the crowd like a tornado with knives. I flipped mid-air, landed a **Spin Drop**, and sent bodies flying like bowling pins. I skid across the sand, reversed, and hurled both blades straight into two enemies.

Direct hits. They rebounded back into my hands, and I blurred forward again.

One Lunaranite—slice, throat gone.

Another—cut across the knees.

Third—launched sky-high and split in mid-air.

I surged upward, body blazing with celestial energy—then crashed down like a meteor, erupting a crater that flattened half the zone.

Surrounded?

Good.

I twirled my daggers and let loose—shredding through enemies at superhuman speed. My movements became a blur—an unstoppable blur of fury.

Chains of energy snapped into my hands. I lashed them out—caught a dragon mid-air—and spun it like a yo-yo from hell before slamming it down, shaking the entire battlefield.

Dragons fell. Dust spiraled.

And still, more Lunaranites dropped in like they hadn't just watched their whole squad get decimated.

I stood still, surrounded. My eyes glowed a piercing amethyst.

"Why do you keep coming?" I said, voice echoing like thunder. "I've already wiped out half your army. What's left?"

I cracked my neck.

"But hey… if you really want more—"

I clapped my hands once. A small spark.

Again—brighter.

And again—louder, fiercer, the energy radiating like a growing star.

Then I snapped my head up, eyes blazing.

"I'LL MAKE SURE TO GIVE YOU BLINDING DESTRUCTION!"

FLASH!

A blinding burst lit up the entire Sand Dunes like it was high noon in a supernova.

Ten celestial mirrors exploded into the air. I transformed into a rolling surge of energy and bounced between them at hyper-light speed, creating so many afterimages I looked like an army of me. The Lunaranites couldn't keep up. They were *lost*.

Then—**CRACK**—I punched one straight in the face with so much force, it triggered a shockwave that cracked the ground beneath us.

I ricocheted between the others like I was in a pinball multiverse, trails of celestial energy streaking behind me. I rocketed into the air, fists glowing like miniature galaxies.

Back in position, I roared,

"ULTIMATE CELESTIAL FISTS!"

Ten colossal, glowing fists rained down like meteors, pummeling the battlefield. Each hit shook the earth and turned Lunaranites into dust particles.

My entire body surged with celestial fire. I boosted downward, both fists charged and aimed at one last dragon.

"TAKE THIS!!"

BOOM!!!

I smashed it with enough force to send *everything*—dirt, bodies, air, time itself—flying backward.

I whipped out my daggers and blitzed through the survivors, throat-slashing in a spinning frenzy. I leapt, flipped, and slammed into the ground again, unleashing another shockwave.

Spin-kick. Decapitation. Dropkick. Stab.

Daggers flying in every direction like the final boss of a bullet hell.

Then I turned, blades wide, and sprinted through the crowd. I spun around mid-stride and fired a **massive celestial beam** from my daggers, the energy shrieking as it tore through the air.

KRA-KOOM!!!

The resulting explosion ended it all. Silence fell.

I stood alone in the aftermath, surrounded by scorched sand and fallen enemies. Blood stained the battlefield, and celestial energy still crackled wildly across my body.

My heart started beating faster than ever, I was tired but not that tired.

The Celestianites turned to me in shock, and Overbrawl was already on the ground defeated. Power was with the crowd of Celestianites, and they were astonished too.

One of the baffled Celestianites walked up to me, wide-eyed.

"Th-there's no way *you*, a 12-year-old, just wiped out like… 140 Lunaranites in a few minutes?! Who even *taught* him this stuff?!"

Another Celestianite leaned toward the one beside him and whispered, "Told you he'd win. Now pay up."

"He's crystallized too…" one muttered, stunned.

"I've never seen a young Crystallized Celestianite take down an army of Lunaranites *and* Dark Don in one go."

"I'm surprised too."

"You think he's gonna be our next leader after Vigilzante?"

"Isn't he part of the prophecy?"

"Where are his parents?"

"He's becoming a hero, I just *know* it."

That's when Power strolled into the middle of the crowd, standing next to me like the main character in a war movie.

"Alright, everybody chill out," he said, waving a hand. "I taught him that stuff. Well… most of it. He picked up some tricks when he was younger too."

He glanced around. "Now clear out. We got somewhere to be."

Suddenly, Overbrawl staggered to his feet. He clutched his scarf, his teeth clenched so hard it looked like they might shatter.

Then—bam! He fired an orange energy dart right in front of us. A vortex exploded open, swirling and twisting until it morphed into a glowing portal. Without warning, he swiped his arm forward, creating a shockwave that *yeeted* us straight through.

And then…

we were falling.

FROM. THE. SKY.

We plunged through thick, foggy gray clouds, the air buzzing with static. Thunder cracked like it was screaming at us, and lightning tore through the sky like it was trying to start a fight.

Rain pelted us. Hard. It felt like the sky was throwing cold punches.

"WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?!" I yelled mid-air, twisting toward Power, who was also plummeting like it was a casual Tuesday.

Power looked down, his face getting serious fast. We finally broke through the bottom of the clouds and saw where we were headed:

Straight into a pool of **pure lightning**.

Yup. A giant crackling pit of blue-white electricity, surrounded by dark rocky terrain, jagged mountains, and some… **things**.

Great. Just great.

Power didn't answer, which meant we were probably about to die.

I squeezed my eyes shut and braced for pain—but instead, I felt this weird tingly, soft sensation. Like static mixed with feathers?

Suddenly, I heard a warping sound—

BAM!

Face-first into the rocky ground.

Power and I groaned as we got up and looked around, dazed.

"What just happened…?" I mumbled, shaking off the fall.

Rain was still hammering down, thunder still yelling, lightning still doing its electric temper tantrum.

Then I saw them.

Creatures. Big ones. Small ones.

Never seen anything like 'em.

One caught my eye: it was massive, armored in cracked dark plating

with glowing energy snaking through the fractures like molten lightning. Its jagged face looked born from nightmares, its arms were radiating raw energy—and debris was levitating around it like gravity was taking a nap. The entire atmosphere buzzed like a live wire.

No doubt.

That thing was using the **Lightning Element**.

And then it hit me.

Zirixes.

Only rock-eating lightning creatures native to one place:

The Thunderstark Kingdom.

Most were small, but a few were massive—and *we* were smack dab in their territory.

That's when I spotted everyone—huddled inside a small glowing-blue cave in the distance, hiding from the storm. Through the thunder and rain, Power turned to me, pulling on a ripped gray cloak.

"Let's get in."

We trudged forward, rain soaking us to the bone, thunder roaring like the gods were arguing.

Inside, the cave was dim and cool, a little haven of calm in the chaos. I plopped down next to Archie and the others—Olsen, Prince, Demaurion, Ella…

And wait—

"ANGEL?!"

There he was, sitting there like this was *normal* or something.

He wore a soft blue jacket and gray jeans. His glasses glinted with mischief. Blue owl ears poked through his hair, talon-like feet tapping the cave floor, and folded shimmering wings rested on his back.

"You're here too? How?!"

- **Angel** — Portal Elemental Electronite
- *Cool nerd, lowkey awesome. Smart, calm under pressure, glasses on but still down to scrap.*

"You really thought I was gonna let you guys have all the fun? Please. Y'all need some guidance."

Just as I was about to say something—

Boom.

Curiosity slapped me straight in the face.

"Angel, what's your reason to become a Hero of Avangard if you wanna become one?" Angel's eyes widened, and he looked down. He sighed, and then he turned back to me,

"For my future. I want to make sure everybody is safe in any possible way, and I also wanna make a lot of money too. In order to help the struggling people in the Rufty Mountains. I want to make sure everyone has a good life, and that's why I want to become a Hero of Avangard. Simple."

I see it now…. Everyone wants to become a Hero of Avangard not without a reason too.

They want to become a Hero of Avangard to—save people and themselves. "I remember when I was 5, I used to be a little Narian Miner.

Of course, I loved the job, but it started to die out. Nowadays, Narian Miners quit their jobs because of how insane they started to get. Back then they used to work in safe mines, and avoid the young miners to use the dangerous mines.

But now they put the young miners in the dangerous mines, like I just don't get it. After seeing people quit and go just so then they can have nothing in the future, is just a sad sight to see. People got hurt while working, and some even got diseases. Being a Narian Miner isn't an easy job, because you get paid like how they pay you as a Mechamio Employee.

I want to change the shape of the world, make it fair, make life easy, so then everyone can have a good time,"

Angel explained. Archie created a little campfire using his abilities, and it started to glow up the entire cave. It crackled, and it gave us warmth. I sighed, "About time, we've been outside for too long."

That was until I noticed Demaurion sitting right next to Archie. He was holding his Trident, and it had 8 Leviathan meat stabbed through the top. I smiled at him knowing that he killed the Leviathan on his own.

He took them out, and he threw the meat at the fire. The meat started to slowly cook, and I stretched my arms and wings. The Thunderstorm out there was still going on, but I could feel peaceful here. Power turned his head to me with a proud smile,

"Don, it's pretty astonishing for you to defeat Dark Don and the entire Lunaranite Army on your own." "You're getting stronger," he rubbed my head. "I know," I said looking down. Prince lay back, "You know, I heard that there was a Power Gem in the Thunderstark Castle. I was thinking—maybe we could take it for our adventures. I mean, we're the Chosen Ones so nothing could go wrong."

Ella chuckled, "Prince, when you say that everything goes wrong." "But I'm sure we'd be okay." I looked at the two with a smile, "Let's just make a plan tomorrow. We sneak into the castle and we take the Power Gem, that way we can be ready to fight the next beast that comes in our way!"

At Foreshade, A Steep Mountain

I stood at the cliff's edge, wind howling around me, tugging at my coat like it wanted to pull me off. Below, thick dark fog churned like a restless ocean—alive with memory and regret.

I didn't scream. I didn't cry. I just breathed.

Steady.

Cold.

Quiet.

"It never leaves," I murmured, eyes scanning the void. "That moment. That face."

My jaw tensed. I could still feel her blood on my claws. Still hear the last words she never got to say.

Silicia.

My creator.

Stolen from me by Celestianites.

That name was a curse in my mouth.

Flashback — 2 years ago (During the CL War)

The rain came down like judgment. Heavy. Relentless.

She ran through the forest—her lab coat shredded, breath ragged, carrying me close in my hatchling form. I was no bigger than a cat, silver-scaled and scared. But she wasn't. Not for a second.

She shifted mid-stride, becoming the black-winged Lunaranite dragon—sleek and spectral—gliding between trees with impossible grace.

Behind her, five Celestianites closed in. No mercy in their eyes. Their energy-spears hummed like reapers' blades.

"Stop!" one shouted. "Surrender—"

She didn't even look back. She launched into the sky, wings cutting the fog, then dove into thicker woods—buying seconds.

Seconds she knew she wouldn't get back.

We landed. She scanned the trees fast. Set me down.

"You're strong," she said softly, brushing a claw against my head. "Stronger than they'll ever know."

She pointed behind a cluster of roots. "Hide. Don't come out until it's over."

I obeyed. I always did.

I watched from the shadows.

She turned to face them, energy building in waves of black and violet.

Then the fight came. Brutal. Fast. Unfair.

She held her ground like a storm.

But storms pass.

And one blow—one perfect strike—ended everything.

A spear through her throat. Just like that.

Silence.

I didn't move. I didn't scream. I just stared as her body crumpled.

When they left, I crawled out.

My claws pressed into the wet ground. I nudged her. Once. Twice.

Nothing.

The rain didn't care. It just kept falling.

And that was when I spoke for the first time.

A whisper that shattered me.

"…Silicia."

Present Day

I opened my eyes.

The memory was always sharp. It never dulled. That was the cost of clarity.

The storm above rumbled—low and distant. Like it knew what was coming.

"This isn't vengeance," I said, staring into the mist. "It's balance."

The Celestianites think they're saviors. Symbols of light.

But they are no better than shadows.

"I'll end every last one of them," I said quietly. "Not out of rage. Out of justice."

No mercy.

No hesitation.

No forgiveness.

They made me a weapon.

Now I'll show them what they created.

CH.8 Blueberry Chaos and the Thunderstark Heist

(12 Hours Later):

We woke up. I grabbed my daggers, threw on my hoodie, and everyone geared up. The sun was blazing, and the sky was finally a clear, brilliant blue. The clouds were snowy white, gliding slowly but gracefully across the horizon. We stepped out of the caves, locked in and fully prepped for the next quest.

Steal that Power Gem.

Defeat the next beast that dares to stand in our way.

I turned back to my crew and smirked.

"Y'all ready?"

"Oh hell yeah, we are!" Archie said, fire sparking in his palms.

We strolled into the dark blue valley and made our way toward the kingdom. The Zirixes were out and about—calm, peaceful, and just vibin' like always.

As we moved deeper into Thunderstark Kingdom, we hit the crowded district. The noise was unreal—people shouting, chatting, trading. The air was basically made of static from all the voices bouncing around.

I had my ear pods in this time, blasting *Renegades of Funk* by Rage Against the Machine.

I was just grooving—throwing in some dance moves, moving my legs to the beat, bobbing my head. At the drop? Yeah, I full-on default danced. I know it's 2025, but some things are sacred, bro.

I swayed my tail, hit the Woah, and completely owned the street like it was a concert stage. Genius-level song choice, not gonna lie.

Mid-walk, I broke into a quick breakdance spin and casually flipped back into stride like it was nothing. Eyes closed, music blasting. Didn't notice a single thing.

Until—

BAM.

Olsen punched the CELESTIA OUT OF ME.

I snapped back, shaking my head, spotting my air pods on the ground. Olsen was glaring.

"Listening to Rage Against the Machine again, huh?"

I puffed, smoke flaring from my nose.

"Ugh, I was almost done with it!"

"Yeah, yeah, whatever. Focus on the mission. We're sneaking into Thunderstark's Castle *tonight.* Right now, we're just grabbing food and trading supplies," Archie explained.

We wandered through rows of market tents packed tight together. So many Electronites bustling around.

"Hey, I'll take two pieces of bread, please."

"Thanks!"

"Can I trade this sword for your shield?"

"I'll give you my cows for your pigs."

"How much for these vegetables?"

"An Electronite banner? Sweet!"

"15 gold for those chickens."

"I'll pay 50 gold for a Zirix pet."

The tents were ragged, held up by crooked wooden poles. Stands everywhere—piled with weapons, food, animals, you name it. Sacks of corn, meat, bread, blueberries—

BLUEBERRIES?!

Okay, pause. You need to know something about me. I have a *wild* relationship with blueberries.

Like, intense.

I love *all* berries—except strawberries (don't ask)—but this stand? This glorious *blue* stand? It had *every* berry. Blueberries, raspberries, blackberries. A berry buffet.

See, I'm a weird dragon. Supposed to be all meat-eater, big bad Celestianite warrior and all. But blueberries? That sweet, juicy taste? Bro, it's everything.

And when I say I go wild, I mean *feral.*

Back in Insane Middle School, they served meat and veggies, but I locked eyes on the berries like a predator. Instincts took over. I *acted up.* Full beast mode for a few juicy blue balls (pause).

But I'm trying to be better. A leader. Civilized. Mature. Prophecy member and all that.

So I crossed my arms and tried to resist the stand. Olsen was paying for food—rich boy energy from his parents' gold—and I kept glancing at the berries.

Each look made my mouth water. Every berry stared back at me like, *"Eat us."*

My instincts screamed,

"TACKLE THE SACKS. DEVOUR THE FRUIT. UNLEASH THE BEAST."

I started shaking. And then… the berries spoke.

In a soft, seductive voice:

"Come on, dragon boy... you know you want it~"

I did. I really did.

But I held firm.

Until they whispered again:

"Don~ just one bite before the seller leaves... just one~"

I took a deep breath. Intrusive thoughts kicked in—**hard.**

All I heard in my head was:

"EAT THE BERRIES. EAT THE BERRIES. FEAST, KING."

"I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!!!" I screamed.

I transformed into my Celestianite Dragon form and sprinted on all fours.

I *lunged* at the berry stand, *obliterating* it.

Slashed open the sacks. Berries poured out like a fruity waterfall.

I made a giant mouthful and went *feral.*

The whole place went into panic mode. People screamed. Ran.

Did I care? **Nope.**

I was deep in berry bliss. Thrashing, chomping, tearing through every juicy orb like a beast possessed.

I roared, "**I NEED MORE!!**"

I *demolished* more stands.

I *plowed* through berry stalls like a bulldozer on a sugar rush.

Made a mountain of berries and consumed it like a madman.

I didn't stop 'til there was nothing left.

Then I flopped on my belly, groaning. My face was covered in berry goop—red, black, blue. A mess.

"Ugh… I think I ate too many…" I groaned, wings stretching out.

Olsen just stood there, eyes closed, breathing deep, looking equal parts disappointed and dead inside.

Then he glared at me.

"What did we *both agree on,* when it came to BERRIES?"

I chuckled nervously.

"Uhh… let's just head back to the cave, yeah?"

Back in the Cave

The time was 5:00 PM, and the thunderstorm had officially crashed the party. The kingdom's lights flickered off like someone flipped the master switch, and just like that, the power was gone. Rain slammed down in sheets—it wasn't just falling, it was *showering*. We were already holed up inside the cave, finishing off the last of the Leviathan meat.

That stuff had to be cooked for a whole day, minimum. Any less and we were playing with our lives—because who knows what ancient cosmic bacteria lives in a creature that's probably older than time. The meat turned out alright, though. Juicy, with that deep-ocean flavor, and the

roasted blue scales? Crunchy as heck. Hot, but not too hot. Soft and crunchy at the same time. Honestly? Not bad. I'd eat it again. Olsen even brought bread for the squad, and a little bonus—some blueberries, just for me.

Personally, I didn't feel like I *deserved* them, but let's be real… I will *never* say no to a blueberry. I transformed into my dragon form, and in 2 milliseconds flat, the whole sack was history. Speed snackin'. The bread had a dusting of spices to keep it from being too basic, and we even had marshmallows to roast. Olsen tried his best, but man absolutely torched his. Thing turned into a crisp fossil. Archie's fire does *not* mess around.

By 6:00 PM, we were all full, groggy, and slowly easing into food comas. I leaned back, looked up, and asked the question on everyone's mind.

"So how *exactly* are we supposed to sneak into Thunderstark Castle? That place is locked down tighter than my hoodie drawstrings on a windy day."

Archie raised an eyebrow. "Also… like, what's the *point*?"

The whole squad looked at him like he'd just asked why water's wet. Prince blinked dramatically and spoke up:

"Dude. King Thunderstark is *still alive*. After going toe-to-toe with the Musinites, Flamenites, Oceananites, *and* Mechanites. If he's still breathing, who knows what he's scheming next?"

Demaurion took a savage bite of Leviathan meat, like he was staring the actual Leviathan in the face while doing it.

"Angel's the smartest one here. Why can't *he* figure it out?"

Angel rolled his eyes so hard I thought they might fall out. Adjusting his glasses, he gave me a look, then addressed the group.

"Alright, listen up. This is gonna be the best plan we've ever pulled off."

He narrowed his eyes. Game mode: *activated*.

The Plan

"Don and Olsen, you're up first. Don's got agility and insane Celestial energy. Olsen's got brute strength and Earth Element backup. The front door's always locked, too tough to break—unless you've got *him*. Olsen can force it open while Don cracks the codes using his Celestial abilities. Just don't use anything lunar-based, or it might mess with the systems.

Once they're in, they'll head to the Electro Knight room. Problem: invisible electric lasers. One wrong move, and ZZZAP—alarm city. That's where Prince comes in. He weaves through the lasers, presses the deactivation button. Boom, lasers gone. But the noise might wake the knights, and that's when Demaurion goes full water beast mode and wipes them out before they can snitch.

Then come the stairs. Ella, Power, and I take the back route. I'll cut the right cords to shut down the surveillance cameras. Ella watches our backs. Power uses the tracking tablet to guide the others toward the Power Gem.

Now, once you reach the silver-blue gates—yeah, *those* gates—the Power Gem's last line of defense? Archie scorches them down with his flames. No problem. Gem secured. I make a portal. Boom. We bounce. Mission complete, no L's taken."

We sat in silence for a moment, letting the plan settle in our stomachs like the Leviathan meat.

"So when's this going down?" Olsen asked, his face lit by the flicker of stormlight.

Angel gave that little evil genius grin.

"Midnight. 12:00 AM sharp."

Outside, the storm was just getting warmed up. Thunder cracked like the sky was breaking apart, and the wind howled through the cave entrance. Nature was doing the most. We knew sleep wouldn't come easy—but we had to try. I curled into my dragon form and closed my eyes. "Get ready, guys… 12:00 AM."

12:00 AM:

I woke up to the sharp BOOM of thunder, rattling the cave walls, and

groggily shook my head. I was still in my dragon form, and I looked outside into the storm. *Is there still chaos out there?* I thought to myself, scanning the sky for any sign of movement. I glanced around the cave; everyone else was still asleep. That meant it was time for my Celestianite roar.

Now, I won't lie—it wasn't the loudest roar ever, but it was definitely menacing. The Electronites, thankfully, were deep sleepers, so they wouldn't hear it. I opened my mouth and let out a roar that sounded like a mix between a velociraptor and an Indoraptor. It echoed through the cave, and everyone shot up, startled by the horrifying noise.

Olsen opened his mouth to speak, but I cut him off, "Olsen, you yawned so loud last time that the whole cave shook. Stay silent."

Olsen closed his mouth, and everyone else slowly roused. Angel's owl wings fluttered open, and he pulled out a few red walkie-talkies. He spread them across the ground, and Prince grabbed one, raising an eyebrow. "What's this for?"

Angel gave him a deadpan look. "To contact you guys while you're sneaking in. And before we start, we need to play some *Mission Impossible* music."

I dug around in my pockets and pulled out my AirPods. "Yeah, I've got it," I said, transforming back into my human form. I handed the AirPods to Angel, who switched the setting to "3," and the familiar intro music started blaring in the background.

With the theme song pumping through the speakers, we moved out. Olsen and I crept quietly from the cave, making our way toward the castle. The others positioned themselves accordingly. The castle loomed ahead, towering above us with its sleek blue, metallic exterior. Black and yellow streaks ran across the surface, and the place was dotted with both tall and short towers.

We exchanged a quick smirk, then I turned toward the door, pulling out my daggers. The entrance was a cybernetic door, made of solid titanium, with a thin line dividing it down the center. Locked, no code. Olsen grinned.

"I got this," he said, cracking his knuckles.

With that, Olsen stepped up and punched the door with enough force to send sparks flying, bits of metal raining down on us. I raised my hand in approval. "Nice one," I said with a grin.

We stepped into the throne room, but things got tricky real fast. The room was massive, bathed in a shimmering electric blue glow. Six towering pillars lined both sides of the room, their surfaces gleaming under the moonlight. At the far end of the room, there was a giant black throne with yellow electric streaks running across it.

"Great, now what?" I muttered, searching for a door with a combination lock.

My walkie-talkie crackled to life, and Angel's voice came through. "Alright, you just need to find it. Got anything that could help?"

"I think I do," I said, my eyes crackling with celestial energy. I activated a power I'd never used before—*Overviewing.* It's like x-ray vision. Most Celestianites get it once they turn 10, and it lets them see through solid objects. I focused, and the entire room shimmered in shades of celestial purple and blue.

I scanned the area, and then I saw it. The door with the combination lock was on the ceiling. *Why the roof?!*

I turned to Olsen and deactivated my ability. "Great, it's up there. Now we need to figure out how to get up there."

Olsen tilted his head. "Can't you just fly?"

"Yeah, I can, but how are you gonna get up there?" I asked.

Olsen scratched his chin, thinking hard. Then his eyes lit up. "Wait. Use those Celestial Chains of yours."

"*I'M NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO PICK YOU UP!* Are you crazy?!" I shouted, exasperated.

"Look, fine. Just try it."

With a huff, I summoned the Celestial Chains. They shot out of my hands and wrapped around Olsen. He grunted, and I lifted him into the air. It was like picking up a pack of water bottles—not too heavy. I flew up, and as we neared the lock, I channeled celestial energy into my finger,

touching the lock. The energy crackled like electricity, and within seconds, the lock disengaged.

The door opened. I pulled Olsen up and flung him off the chains. He landed with a thud, groaning as he stood up, rubbing his back.

"You know, next time, don't use those chains. They *hurt*," Olsen grumbled.

I nodded, but before I could respond, we found ourselves in a long, blue hallway. Fancy lights lined the ceiling, casting a soft glow, but the hall seemed to stretch on forever. At the far end, I could see the glimmer of electrical lasers.

"This is gonna be a long one," I muttered, pulling out my daggers. We began walking slowly, trying to make as little noise as possible. Guards were the only ones awake at this hour, and they were probably watching for intruders.

Minutes felt like hours. Then hours felt like an eternity. Olsen and I passed the time by singing "I Want It That Way" by the Backstreet Boys to keep from losing our sanity.

D: "TELL ME WHY?!"

O: "AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A HEARTACHE!"

D: "TELL ME WHY?!"

O: "AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A MISTAKE!"

D: "TELL ME WHY?!"

O: "I NEVER WANNA HEAR YOU SAY!"

In perfect sync: *"WOO! I Want It That Way!"*

After what felt like years of singing the same song over and over again, we finally reached the lasers.

I smirked. "At least it passed the time."

Angel's voice crackled through the walkie-talkie again. "Alright, it's Prince and Demaurion's turn. Do you see the knights standing shoulder to shoulder on either side of the hallway?"

I looked around and saw the knights, standing still in their blue and black armor. Electricity pulsed through their suits, like veins of power, and some had blackened arms while others had only one.

"Yeah, I see them," I responded.

"Good. Demaurion will take care of any knights that wake up, and Prince will help you get through the lasers," Angel explained.

Suddenly, Prince shot through the hallway, his Lightning Bird form blazing with energy. He was faster than I expected. Demaurion appeared next, morphing into his sea serpent Leviathan form and zooming toward us.

He shifted back into his human form and caught his trident. "Alright, let's get to work," he said, smirking.

Prince crackled with lightning. "Yeah, let's do this."

Prince dashed effortlessly through the labyrinth of lasers, his movements sharp and fluid. Without hesitation, he pressed the red button beside the gleaming blue titanium door, and it slid open with a slow hiss. As it did, the lasers vanished. Luckily, the guards hadn't heard a thing, so Demaurion refrained from launching an attack on them. We were fortunate, really—this spot seemed to be a network of ten caves, positioned at every conceivable angle and direction. The ceilings were covered in a deadly forest of jagged electrical spikes, each one crackling with lightning. If anything fell, it would be fried instantly.

The caves themselves were dark and damp, their interiors stretching into eerie blackness that seemed endless. The air was thick with moisture, the kind of dampness that made every surface feel cold and uncomfortable. But then, a voice crackled through the walkie-talkie. It was Power, steady as ever. "Alright, Don, you should be in the room with the ten caves. Don't panic, the one you want is the lightest one."

I looked around, trying to find a source of light in the pitch black. "Which one's the lightest one?" I asked, feeling a bit lost.

"Go through the middle one, cave number 5," Power replied.

I turned to the cave directly in front of me, and sure enough, it glowed with a soft pink hue, just enough to make it stand out in the otherwise bleak landscape. I nodded, signaling the others to follow. We moved quickly, entering the cave, though it didn't exactly get any brighter as we ventured deeper. The faint pink glow cast eerie shadows on the black rocks, and

the constant sound of water dripping from above echoed around us. It was the kind of place that could go on forever, but it was too damp and claustrophobic for my liking.

I could feel my patience wearing thin. "Alright, time to put these wings to use," I muttered to myself, and with a deep breath, I spread my wings wide. They flickered with a few colors, and the others watched in confused silence. A moment later, my crystallized wings started to glow a bright purple, casting a radiant light across the cave. The gloom was chased away like the night at sunrise.

"Woah… How'd you do that?" Olsen asked, his voice full of awe.

I flashed him a grin. "Just a little Celestianite perk."

We continued forward, but the cave suddenly trembled beneath our feet. "Did you guys feel that?" I asked, halting in my tracks. Olsen looked around, clearly hearing nothing.

"No, I don't hear any—"

The cave shook again, a deep rumble that cut him off.

"Okay, WE GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE!" Prince shouted, his wings flapping rapidly as he soared ahead. Without another word, we all bolted toward the exit. But the cave had other plans. Rocks began to fall, crashing down from the ceiling in a cacophony of noise, and the ground shook with a force that threatened to swallow us whole.

"MOVE!" I yelled, charging up with celestial energy, my wings flapping furiously to keep pace with Prince. Olsen, now in his Rockslide Ankylosaurus form, and Demaurion, in his Dragonic Leviathan form, followed behind, but the cave was falling apart around us. The sound of crumbling stone filled the air, punctuated by the sharp cracks of jagged spikes breaking loose.

I darted between falling rocks and debris, my heart racing, but the cave was relentless. It was as if it wanted to trap us here. I ducked, dodging a falling spike just in time, but then the tremors escalated. The entire cave seemed to come alive, shaking violently as rocks and debris began to block the exit.

"DON! WATCH OUT!" Olsen shouted, his voice laced with panic.

I looked up just as a jagged, earth-shattering spike came hurtling down. It pierced through my shimmering wing with terrifying force, embedding deep into the crystalized structure. I gasped in pain as I was slammed to the ground, the weight of the spike pinning me down. Blood began to spill from the wound, staining the stone floor beneath me.

"DON!" Prince cried out, his wings flaring as he darted toward me, desperation in his eyes. He landed beside me, trying to lift the spike with his wings, but it was too heavy.

Suddenly, Olsen came charging from behind, his tail-club swinging down with ferocious force. The spike shattered into pieces, scattering across the cave floor. I gritted my teeth and tried to push myself up, but the pain in my wing was unbearable. I couldn't fly, and moving in my dragon form was a struggle. The weight of the rocks falling around me felt like a hundred tons, and my limbs were too weak to carry me much further.

"I got you, bro!" Olsen shouted, his voice filled with determination.

More rocks rained down, blocking our path, but Olsen didn't hesitate. He transformed into his human form and wrapped an arm around me, helping me to my feet. I was limping, barely able to stay conscious as we pushed forward. My vision blurred with every step, the cave's collapse ringing in my ears.

"I don't think we can… make it," I murmured weakly, my voice barely audible.

"We're gonna make it!" Olsen reassured me, though his voice sounded strained as the rocks crashed down around us.

I stumbled, exhaustion weighing down on me with every step. I could hear muffled voices, but I couldn't make them out clearly. My body was slowing, my movements sluggish, and the next thing I knew, I was falling to the ground, unable to keep my eyes open.

I felt the rocks close in around me as everything went dark.

My eyes fluttered open slowly, voices muffled in the distance like echoes in water. I sat up, blinking a few times, trying to figure out where I was.

It hit me—I was still in the Thunderstark Kingdom. Inside the cave. The one where we all crashed to rest.

I looked around.

There they were—Olsen, Prince, Demaurion, Archie, Ella, Angel… and Power.

My gaze dropped to my injured wing. A bandage was wrapped around the secondary mainsail of my dragon wing, still shimmering in that signature bright violet hue, with white flecks glinting like stars. At least that part of me hadn't dimmed.

Sunlight spilled in through the mouth of the cave. Morning. Which meant… everyone was awake.

I turned to Angel. "Did you guys get the Power Gem?"

Angel smirked like he just won a video game on hard mode. He reached into his pocket and pulled out a shiny, cyan, hexagonal gem, glowing with a faint aura and humming with energy like a choir of ghosts.

He handed it to me. I held it in my hand, watching the cyan light swirl inside like a mini galaxy.

I turned to the group, then locked eyes with Power. "What happened?"

"You got hit by something called *ozz*," Power said casually.

I squinted. "Ozz? Like… that thing we studied in Insane Middle School? The fusion of rocks and lightning? Venomous static electricity or whatever?"

Power nodded. "Yeah. That exact ozz. I forgot to warn you. It won't kill you, but it can knock you out or mess you up pretty bad."

I groaned. "Well, I'm standing now—so that's something. But what was that earthquake?"

Angel's face darkened. He looked down and muttered, "It's the Thunderstark Dragon Turtle… Liren."

"Liren? Who the heck is Liren?!"

"**LIREN. THE. DRAGON. TURTLE.**" Angel shouted, hands flying like he was on a game show timer. "He lives *under* the Thunderstark Castle. Some myths say he's the reason the castle moves from place to place every day. BECAUSE. HE. MOVES. IT!"

My heart skipped a beat. "So… you're saying we've been chilling on top of a literal monster this whole time?"

Before he could answer, I heard it—screams echoing through the kingdom. Then the ground shook, hard. Thunder boomed.

We all rushed outside. I slid to a stop in the dirt, looked up…

And froze.

A **colossal** Dragon Turtle towered over us—**twice** the size of the Leviathan. Do you even realize how big the Leviathan is? **1,625 feet tall**. This beast? **3,250 feet**. We were looking at a *Titan*.

Its body was jet-black, striped with streaks of glowing yellow lightning. Its shell was jagged and spiked, shining with light blue energy. Its eyes—pure electric blue—glared down at us, and its mouth was massive, shaped like a hooked yellow beak. Electricity surged through its shell like lightning rivers. It roared—a sound that was part Godzilla, part velociraptor, part T-Rex, part dragon. It made birds *evacuate the sky*.

Its mouth lit up—charged with electricity. Then…

BOOM.

A massive lightning beam blasted toward us.

"GET DOWN!" I yelled.

We all dove to the ground. The moment the beam hit, a shockwave exploded outward, launching us **miles** away like ragdolls.

I tumbled across the dirt like a human tumbleweed. When I stopped rolling, I looked up—and saw its monstrous claw coming down on me like a falling skyscraper.

"NOPE."

I teleported just in time, reappearing in a crouch a few feet away. My eyes locked with Liren's, now glowing with rage. I bared my teeth and unsheathed my daggers, celestial energy crackling through them.

I bolted forward.

I slashed at its leg mid-air—blood sprayed, but the turtle didn't even flinch. It just kept stomping like I was an annoying bug. I landed and backed off, gripping my weapons tighter as sweat slid down my face.

"This is gonna be one hell of a boss fight," I muttered.

I spun around. "Guys?! GUYS WHERE ARE YOU?!"

"WE'RE RIGHT HERE!" Angel called from behind Liren's massive foot.

My eyes widened. The beast was about to stomp them.

Celestial energy flared in my eyes. I clenched my daggers, smirked, and whispered, "Alright then…"

I *sprinted*. Celestial trails followed me as I ran straight up Liren's scaly leg—gravity? Never heard of her.

Slash after slash, I carved glowing lines into its leg. Scales rained down like deadly confetti.

I jumped back, flung out celestial chains, and *hooked them onto its snout*. I yanked myself forward, flipping over its head.

As I dove downward, the beast opened its mouth and charged another beam.

"WHOA!"

I twisted mid-air just in time to dodge the laser blast. The sky lit up around me.

Wind howled in my ears as I fell, faster and faster. I grit my teeth and focused, landing on Liren's massive shell.

Jagged spikes jutted out around me like obsidian towers. Liren shook his body like a wet dog, and I was sent tumbling across the shell, bouncing off barbs and spikes.

"Don't move, don't move, don't move—"

He moved. Obviously.

I was flung to the edge—and then…

I fell.

"AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

I was plummeting from skyscraper height, my wings too battered to catch me. The ground was charging at me like a freight train I couldn't dodge.

"This is it. I'm done for. Totally toast—wait."

A sudden spark of hope hit me.

The Power Gem.

I yanked it from my pocket, dropping my dagger in the process as I

gripped the gem tight, desperation twisting my fingers.

"Come on, come on, please—"

Nothing.

I clenched my fist harder, willing it to respond.

Still nothing.

"DO SOMETHING!" I shouted into the wind. "POWER GEM, I NEED YOU NOW!"

Then—BOOM.

A burst of cyan energy exploded outward from me, shooting straight up like a rocket breaking through clouds. Electricity crackled beneath my skin, pulsing through every nerve. My heart hammered in my chest like a war drum.

I wasn't falling anymore.

I was fighting gravity.

I hovered midair, my body humming with raw Speed Energy—cyan lightning flickering through my veins in rapid bursts. The transformation surged through me, leaving me breathless, chest heaving as my heart synced to the electric rhythm. The blinding glow wrapped me tight.

But Liren wasn't waiting.

Before I could fully steady myself, he lunged—a blur of black and violet lightning, faster than anything I'd ever faced.

I dodged. Barely.

His claws slashed through the air, narrowly missing my side. The force knocked me sideways, and I hit the cracked pavement hard, the impact jarring my bones.

My vision blurred. Damn, this guy was fast. Way faster than anything I'd fought before.

I forced myself up, the Speed Energy still coursing, but sweat and grit streaked my face. My wings fluttered weakly.

Breathing hard, I locked eyes with Liren again, gripping my dagger tighter.

"Alright," I muttered. "Time to end this."

I surged forward, light itself seeming to bend around me. I dodged

strike after strike, barely keeping pace with his lightning-fast assaults. My muscles burned, but I pushed harder, faster.

Then—opening—an opening.

I threw everything into one powerful punch, aimed straight at his jaw.

Boom.

The impact rocked the ground beneath us, sending a shockwave rippling across Thunderstark Kingdom like a storm's aftershock.

Liren staggered back, stunned and snarling, eyes flashing electric blue.

He roared—fierce and furious—but his strength was fading.

Slowly, he collapsed, the earth trembling as his massive form hit the ground with a thunderous crash, kicking up a cloud of dust that choked the sky.

I hovered, exhausted but victorious, the cyan glow fading from my body as the transformation slipped away. The Power Gem tumbled through the air and landed softly at my feet.

I bent down and picked it up, then noticed my dagger lying nearby—scratched and smeared with dirt, but intact.

Behind me, cheers rose from my friends.

I turned, managing a tired but victorious smirk.

"Three beasts down," I said, sliding the dagger back into its sheath. "A few more to go. Where to next, Angel?"

Angel grabbed the map from Archie's hands, pushing his glasses up as he studied the route carefully. His eyes grew wide.

"Musicia…" he whispered.

I grinned and stepped onto the fallen titan's massive shell, gazing up at the swirling clouds.

"Then let's get started on the real adventure."

And just like that—the story truly began.

CH.9 Homicide

At Foreshade

The wind howled through the shattered windows of the castle, carrying a ghostly chill. ***Overbrawl — 1.2 Billion y/o Ex-Zenith,*** stepped inside, head bowed, each footstep echoing like a funeral march on the cracked marble floor.

He raised his head slowly—his gaze locking with Dreadixz's. Eyes dull and exhausted, he stared into the soul of the dark king like a beast that had crawled back from war. His tattered scarf whipped in the wind, the frayed ends fluttering like battle flags.

"I'm back…" he muttered, voice hollow.

On his throne of obsidian and bones, Dreadixz — gripped the armrests with clawed fingers and rose with calculated slowness. His eyes narrowed as he studied Overbrawl, who was bloodied, limping, and barely holding himself together—one arm hanging uselessly, nearly severed.

"Ah… finally," Dreadixz sneered, lacing his fingers behind his back. "My *'finest'* soldier returns… looking like a chewed-up carcass."

He descended the stairs of the throne platform with deliberate calm, his voice dripping with venom. Then, in a flash of lunar light, his body expanded and twisted—limbs stretching, scales spreading, horns jutting skyward—as he transformed into his Lunaranite Dragon form.

The roar that erupted from his throat shattered the eerie wind's whispers and echoed across the entire region of Foreshade like a war drum.

"And to think," he snarled, walking slowly toward Overbrawl, "you were so confident in killing the Chosen Ones."

He stopped just inches away, grabbed Overbrawl by the jaw, and yanked his face upward.

"Yet all I see… is *failure*."

His voice was quiet, but it rang with a dark, ancient malice. He released Overbrawl, letting the wounded warrior stumble back. Dreadixz slithered away, his jet-black tail sweeping ominously behind him.

"How *dare* you disrupt my plans—"

Knock knock.

A sudden bang echoed through the chamber. Dreadixz turned toward the massive iron portcullis at the front of the hall, a scowl spreading across his draconic features.

"…Enter."

The gates groaned open, smoke and shadows billowing in like a living storm. From the fog emerged a new figure—tall, hulking, and wrapped in shifting black shadows. He looked eerily similar to Overbrawl, but twisted. His body was cloaked in a deep obsidian hue, with red eyes glowing like twin hells. Dark energy flared around him like crackling black fire.

Dreadixz's scorn morphed into something closer to satisfaction—not because of Overbrawl, but because of *him*.

"Well, well," he said in a smooth, deadly tone. "Took you long enough to show your face."

The figure clenched his fists. "I'm not here to serve. I'm here to *pave my own path*."

His voice was calm, confident, cold.

"I don't play nice with others, and I sure as hell don't sign alliances with strangers I barely remember. But you, Dreadixz… King or not, I'm here to challenge the narrative."

Dreadixz turned away, shifting back into his humanoid form with a flicker of lunar energy. He strolled back to his throne and reclined with the air of a warlord savoring a storm.

"Incarceration…" he said with a wicked smile. "The traitor of the Zeniths.

The power-hungry fool who abandoned the Heavenly Spot of Celestia after a *'minor disagreement'*… Tell me, where's your little *pet*?"

The pet he referred to was no ordinary beast—it was a nightmare forged in darkness, a creature made to devour hope and burn legends to ash.

Incarceration's smile was slow and dangerous. Black fire danced along his knuckles as he crossed two fingers and touched them to his forehead.

"Homicide," he whispered.

His eyes snapped open, flashing crimson.

Dark magic exploded from his arms, spiraling into the air in tendrils of screaming shadow. The energy twisted, coiled, and then—*formed*. A massive shape emerged: a nine-headed Hydra, black-scaled and scarred with white gashes, eyes glowing a menacing violet. Each of its heads swayed like cobras preparing to strike. Its claws gleamed obsidian-sharp, and a jagged purple sail ran from its spines down its monstrous tail.

Dreadixz chuckled, watching the beast take shape with gleeful approval.

"Ah yes… I nearly forgot you wield the Nightmare Element. Able to summon any creature—real or imagined. Even ones that *shouldn't* exist."

His grin widened.

"I'm impressed."

He stood, eyes flickering with deadly intent. "Now go. *Find the Chosen Ones*. I want their bodies at my feet. And one of their heads—*gone*."

The Hydra let out a thunderous roar that shook the walls. Incarceration turned to it, his voice low, dark, and loyal.

"Yes… master."

The skies of Avangard were clear and blue, stretching endlessly above us like an infinite canvas. I was in my dragon form, soaring through the clouds with my wings wide open, basking in the freedom of flight. Puffy white clouds drifted around us, and birds chirped in the breeze as they flew by. A few Griffins joined us for a bit, then peeled off toward their homes in the mountains.

I twirled mid-air and dove through the fluffiest cloud I could find, feeling

it burst around me like cotton candy. The others were flying with me too—Ella, Angel, and Olsen were riding on my back. Prince zipped beside us in his Lightning Bird form, flapping his wings with little thunder booms and streaks of electricity trailing behind him like party lights. Archie flew through the clouds in his blazing Phoenix form, burning holes through the mist like a tiny meteor on fire. Demaurion, in his Leviathan form, glided through the sky with serious sea serpent energy.

Where were we headed? Across Thunderstark, past Naria and the Sand Dunes—we were making our way to **Musicia**, a place we'd *never* been to before.

"I heard it's just one giant non-stop party!" Prince shouted, his voice crackling with static as he bolted ahead.

"Eh, I doubt it," Olsen replied. "But I know there's tons of music there. I mean, the name kinda gives it away."

I glanced down and nearly choked. We were *high*. Like, "see the curvature of the planet" high. Below us were entire oceans, waves crashing into each other with blue chaos. I could even spot the Land of Hearts from way up here.

The wind was warm against my scales, and the air smelled like pure freedom. Then Prince lightning-dashed above me.

"Alright! We're close!" he said, beak pointing downward. "Musicia's right there!"

I followed his gaze and caught a shimmer of lights in the distance.

"You're right! I can see it!" Ella shouted with a grin.

Olsen gave me a playful punch on the back. "Well then, let's go defeat the next beast! Come on, Don—you're about to be a Celestianite leader *and* a Hero of Avangard!"

I smiled wide. "Yeah, alright. Let's get down there and BECOME HEROES!"

We dove through the foggy clouds like shooting stars and landed gracefully on the glowing streets of Musicia. Olsen and Ella hopped off my back, and I slowly shifted back into my regular form. Everyone else followed suit, transforming back one by one.

The sight before us was *insane*. The city shimmered under the sun's rays in glowing yellows and sparkling pinks. Towering buildings of gold and rose quartz twisted upward in chaotic harmony. Glitter literally erupted from rooftops, drifting lazily through the air. It was like stepping into a living music video.

Crowds of people filled the sidewalks, weaving through the pulsing city. Music echoed from all directions, and the air buzzed with excitement.

"THIS IS INSANE!" Prince shouted, wide-eyed with joy.

"I know right? They've got music playing from *everywhere*! Come on!" I said, grabbing his wing as we took off running through the neon-lit streets.

The sun hovered above us while the sky shifted to soft orange. Cars zoomed by with slick style, and honestly? This place had *everything*. Olsen looked like he was about to ascend to a higher plane.

"I think I'm having the best time of my life," he said.

Ella smiled as the breeze caught her hair. "Guess this is what a new adventure feels like."

We wandered deeper into the city—until my ears twitched. Hard. Like "danger radar" twitch.

Angel paused and looked at me. "Don? Your ears are doing the weird twitch thing again. Should I be worried? Do you need, like, a Celestianite doctor?"

"No, I'm good," I said, eyes scanning the sky. "It's just what happens when I hear something coming… or *someone* flying at full speed ri—OOF!"

I got *tackled*. Hard. Whatever hit me felt like a tiger with revenge in its heart. I hit the ground with a thud.

"Get up, slowpoke," a sassy, familiar voice said.

I teleported a few feet away, making whoever-it-was faceplant into the street. I turned to look—and yep, I knew that voice.

Sophia — 12 y/o Musical Tiger with the Sound Element.

She looked up from the ground with a frown. "Hey!"

I rolled my eyes. "Well hello, Sophia. Just casually tackling me out of the sky again?"

She had transformed into her tiger form—a yellow tiger with pink

stripes. But she quickly shifted back into her base form, tail swishing. "Yeah yeah, laugh it up, dragon boy. I thought you were a Lunaranite at first. Forgot you're a Crystallized Celestianite!"

I smirked. "Anyone else part of your surprise attack?"

That's when

Javier — 12 y/o Operation Hedgehog with the Control Element, popped out from behind a building, sighing like this was just another Tuesday. He strolled toward us, hands in his pockets. Blue coat, blue jeans, side-swept hair. The most innocent being in all of Avangard, and I trust him with my *life*.

Sophia crossed her arms as she looked at the rest of the crew. "Long time no see! We came for the festival!"

"Wait—what festival?" Ella asked.

"The **Musicia Festival**!" Sophia beamed. "You don't know? It's the biggest celebration for all Soundanites. Music, lights, performances—it's a whole vibe. And it starts in a few hours!"

We all exchanged looks. Glances. Smirks. The classic "are we doing this?" face.

I turned back to her. "We're in," I said, shaking her hand.

"WOO! PARTY TIME!" Prince roared.

But Sophia suddenly gagged and covered her nose. "Okay, but y'all gotta change. How long have you been wearing those outfits?"

"Hmm," I said, counting on my fingers. "One… two… maybe eleven days?"

"ELEVEN DAYS?!" she screeched. "Boy, you need to *touch* soap and fabric softener immediately. Lucky for you, I own a place here."

Power raised an eyebrow. "Where?"

She grinned and pointed ahead. "Follow me."

We followed her through the chaotic hum of the city until we reached a house that was both small *and* somehow huge. It was bubblegum pink with warm yellow light glowing from inside—straight out of a fantasy catalog from Iris Town. She opened the door and waved us in.

And inside? Absolute madness—in the best way.

Four different couches were chillin' on the right side of the living room, surrounding a red-and-white patterned carpet. The lighting was soft yellow, and the walls were painted white with brown wooden paneling going halfway up like they were wearing fancy belts. A TV sat on a stone-white stand in front of the couches, surrounded by vases of flowers that made the whole setup feel oddly elegant.

To the left was a wooden door in the distance, and right beside it—spiraling stairs leading upward like something magical was waiting at the top. We all plopped down on the couches, and that's when Sophia dropped the bomb.

She pulled out a bag bursting with clothes. "I got your hero suits ready. Just don't ruin them, alright?"

"HERO SUITS?! This just got even better!" Prince practically screamed, bouncing like a kid in a candy store. My eyes sparked with Celestial energy as I looked at the bag. "Heroes… it's suiting time."

And just like that, the trial began.

We took turns showering upstairs—though let's be real, Demaurion hogged the bathroom like it was a throne room. I'm not joking—it was *so* annoying. Prince accidentally zapped the lights off with his electricity, and poor Javier had to get them back on like some unpaid maintenance man.

After I was done, I made sure to lather up with "Scale Smoother~"—the lotion that makes your dragon scales look fierce, sleek, and extra shiny. Gotta keep the aesthetic on point.

Then I hit the training room near the bathroom. Worked up a sweat, powered up my celestial skills, and even learned a fresh new move: **Insane Celestial Flick**. It's where I flick my fingers charged with Celestial energy and cause a shockwave strong enough to obliterate *literally* anything. I was also getting better at bouncing off walls like a pinball at a rave. This new speed boost? Oh yeah—my final move's gonna hit like a whole meteor strike now.

Once we were all cleaned up and powered up—it was time.

HERO. SUIT. TIME.

Cue the music. Cue the montage.

Olsen stepped out first: rocking an earthy green metallic suit with rugged brown shoulder pads. His helmet looked like a thick green-and-black beak, and his gloves? Straight-up stone. He wore black leather pants, green-and-black boots, and a green baldric that carried his signature Hammer of Earth.

Prince's suit was electric (literally). Blue with lightning-yellow streaks zipping across the fabric. Yellow pants. Slim-fit blue hoodie. Black gloves. And some wild blue cybernetic shoes that let him bolt at top speed. His back had a sleek electric sail running along his spine.

Demaurion's suit was cyber-oceanic. Blue with shark vibes. He wore blue gauntlets, darker gloves, and **Aqua Jets**—massive knee-high boots with fins and leg-thrusters for wild speed in water *and* air. He also had a water helmet, so yeah, he was ready to go full Leviatham.

Archie looked like a full-on mech phoenix. Red cyber-suit with orange flame streaks on the chest. Metallic wings flared on his back, red mixed with orange like fire dancing in motion. His helmet? A flaming phoenix head with black and yellow accents. His eyes glowed with unhinged fury. His legs were encased in gray metallic armor, and his jet-boots looked like they were ready to explode on command. His gloves were such a dark red they almost didn't look red anymore.

Ella wore a sandy-brown jumpsuit with a visor dusted from the dunes. Tight black pants, rounded brown gauntlets, and dune-colored boots with claws that could pierce steel. She looked fierce.

Angel's suit was full-on vortex-blue, a high-tech cyborg look with a glowing hexagon in the middle of his chest.

Sophia kept it simple but iconic—jacket, headphones, and a pink cannon locked onto her right arm like a DJ ready for war.

And then—me.

I stepped out in a full-body purple jumpsuit with a bold black X slashing across the chest. Gold rings shimmered around my wrists, paired with white gloves traced with green patterns. My purple hiking shoes matched my hoodie, which was styled to look like a dragon's head—yeah, no joke.

I had a yellow metallic belt strapped around my waist, black pants with yellow knee-pads, and a long black scarf whipping behind me like I was already flying into battle.

After the glam-up, we all crashed back onto the couches, feeling like the baddest crew in town. Sophia was casually brushing her hair with a pink brush, completely unfazed.

"So," I asked, turning to her, "when are we heading out? And where's this festival even happening?"

Sophia didn't even blink. "Still got a few hours. You idiots can just chill for now."

"Gee, thanks," I muttered, rolling my eyes as I stared at the TV. Nothing was even on. Just a blank screen and a mind full of too much.

Because when you're chosen for a prophecy *this* huge, you start thinking. *Can I really pull this off?*

I mean, if Olsen hadn't saved me back there, I'd be toast. But here I am. Still breathing. Still questioning.

The prophecy? Blueberries?? My brain was doing backflips.

I looked out the window.

The sky was bleeding colors—shades of blue, orange, and gold, like the sunset itself was painting the end of the day by hand. Birds flew across the horizon. Cars beeped. People talked. Golden skyscrapers sparkled with pink glitter floating through the air like stardust. And those last sunbeams hit my face through the window.

I turned back to the TV, lost in thought.

Is this prophecy really that important?

I want to be a warrior, yeah… but that feeling's starting to blur.

Maybe there's something deeper here.

Something I'm missing.

"Hey Don, you alright? You look like you've been staring into space!" Sophia said.

"I'm alright," I replied. "Just thinking. I wanna become a hero to prove to everyone that I'm not a weak, embarrassing, or stupid mess. But I know there's a deeper message—I'm just not seeing it."

Sophia sighed and set down her brush.

"Look, I wanna become a hero too! For fame, because I wanna be popular! I wanted to be like my idol, Power."

"POWER IS YOUR IDOL?!" I hollered.

Sophia laughed.

"Of course he is, I got like, a million pictures of this guy in my room. Don't tell anyone though."

She leaned in a bit, suddenly serious.

"Look Don, maybe the message *is* being like a hero. You know, save everyone, protect them from danger, stop evil. Like that."

I turned away, thinking about her words. Maybe she was right. I *could* save people. I *could* protect them. I *could* stop evil.

Maybe… I was already a hero.

I stayed on the couch for a few hours, then eventually drifted off to sleep. When I finally woke up, everyone was standing right in front of me.

"What the—we're already going?" I asked, groggy and surprised.

Olsen smirked. "Yup, come on, we got a few minutes left."

I jumped up from the couch and we bolted outside.

We burst through the door, entering the glowing night city. Lights shimmered everywhere. The stars twinkled above us, and the moon beamed down like a spotlight on our crew. We walked through the city, weaving through traffic, until we reached a huge pink casino covered in colorful blinking lights. It towered over us like a neon castle.

"Woah, so THIS is where we're going?!" Prince shouted in excitement.

"Yup, and you're gonna love it," Sophia said, her eyes gleaming.

"WHOO HOO PARTY TIME!!!!" Javier yelled.

We pushed through the glitzy pink doors, and BAM—instant party overload.

There was a massive stage at the back, a giant white rug, tons of pink tables, and a packed crowd. Music thumped through the room as a live band jammed on trumpets, drums, and electric guitars. The whole place was gold and pink, with flickering red and blue lights that danced across the walls and floor like fireworks.

Demaurion clenched his fists.

"This place is HUGE, and I'm ANGRY ABOUT IT!"

There were water fountains, a sleek black car on display, and even a fish tank with a shark and an eel just chilling like party VIPs.

I stared around in awe. The music was wild, totally unlike anything I'd heard before. And for some reason, people were just… casually spilling juice. For fun?

Archie lit his hands on fire.

"I'm gonna go do the Fireball Game over there. Demaurion, you coming?"

Demaurion kept his eyes locked on the fish tank.

"I'll hang out with the fish."

Olsen wandered off to the Knockout Arena with Power, and Ella headed for the Ball of Yarn Spot (don't ask).

I stood there next to Sophia, feeling totally lost.

"Ya got any suggestions? I don't really got any ideas," I asked.

"Are you serious? You can try singing on stage. I'll get the others," she said.

My eyes widened.

"WOAH WOAH WOAH WOAH WOAH! Singing ON STAGE?! Sophia, you KNOW I got stage fright!"

She smirked.

"You're about to become a hero, so just try facing your fears."

I backed up.

"No no no no no, I don't think you know what I mean. Remember what happened LAST TIME I went on stage?"

"Yeah, but at least you didn't slip and fall on a banana peel," she smiled.

My face went deadpan.

"I slipped and fell on a banana peel."

"You'll be fine, just get on stage!" she exclaimed.

I looked to my right and saw the backstage door near the Fireball Game. I hesitated. But… Sophia was right. If I wanted to be a Hero of Avangard, I had to face my fears.

I gulped and started walking. I pushed through the crowd, weaving between people.

Then, out of nowhere—

"DANCE! I WANT TO SEE YOU DANCE!" a voice shouted.

I turned. It was an old man with a brown bird on his shoulder. He wore a beanie, a scarf, and a worn-out jacket.

I opened my mouth to respond, but he cut me off by pulling out a *Valorant gun*.

"DANCE OR DIE! I'VE NEVER SEEN SOMEONE FROM THE PROPHECY DANCE IN MY LIFE! IT'S EITHER I GET MY ENTERTAINMENT OR YOU GET YOUR SOUL TAKEN!"

I was 99% sure this guy was drunk, and yeah—pointing a gun at a prophecy kid should be illegal. But I wasn't in the mood to die, so…

"You want me to uh, d-dance right? I'll show you one!"

I did a few sidesteps to the beat, pushing myself back and repeating it. He still didn't look impressed. I sighed.

"Ugh, fine, I'll do it."

I busted out the slick-back dance toward the door. The guy cheered, still waving the gun.

"THAT'S WHAT I LIKE TO SEE!"

I slick-backed all the way to the backstage door, opened it quickly, and made sure no one saw me go in. Inside, a yellow light shined down, and there was a narrow staircase leading up. I climbed it and found another door at the top. I opened it—and boom. I was backstage.

The black curtains were just in front of me, and a microphone stand sat under a spotlight. I grabbed the mic, keeping it off to avoid making a scene.

That was when the door slammed open behind me, and the other four stormed in—with Sophia.

"Oh, you're doing it too?" Archie asked, raising an eyebrow.

"Yeah, I guess," I mumbled, staring at the mic.

Olsen stepped in.

"Okay look, I mean, it simply can't be that hard, right? RIGHT?!"

"I don't have stage fright," Demaurion said, tiny drops of water dripping onto the floor, "I just don't feel like going on stage."

Sophia clapped her hands together.

"Alright guys, now get out there and show them who you are!"

She PUSHED us. Literally pushed ALL of us.

ON. STAGE.

In front of EVERY SINGLE INDIVIDUAL IN THE CASINO.

I stood there, hands shaking, praying no one would notice us. And for a second… no one did.

Until someone RUINED THAT.

"Alright uh, are the next people the Chosen Ones?" the announcer shouted through the mic.

Every head in the building turned to us. Silence dropped like a nuke. The music stopped. The room froze.

My eyes twitched. I started to sweat. My hands were clammy. The only sound was crickets.

My heart thumped like a drumline. What do I say? What do I do? Think, Don, THINK! What could I possibly sing right now?

After a few seconds of straight panic, I had it.

The announcer leaned in, smiling.

"Alright Don, get us started!"

I cleared my throat like I was about to drop the greatest vocal moment of the century. "You are… my fire…"

I shot Olsen a look. The boy didn't need a second cue. He opened his mouth like destiny itself summoned him.

"The one… desire…"

Archie whipped his head around. "Prince!!"

Prince, with zero hesitation: "Believe when I saaay…"

Archie threw his hands in the air like he was conducting the dang universe. "Come on, Demaurion!!"

Demaurion (already way too into it): "I want it THAT WAYYYYY—"

Archie, now screaming like his life depended on it: "TELL ME WHY?!"

ALL OF US, IN PERFECT SYNC: "Ain't nothin' but a heartache!"

Archie again, louder: "TELL ME WHY?!"

IN SYNC, AGAIN: "Ain't nothin' but a mistaaaake!"

Archie pointed like he was summoning the final boss: "Archie say 'I'—"

Archie: "I never wanna hear you saaay—"

Archie, FINALE MODE: "COME ONNNNN!"

EVERYONE IN HARMONIZED PERFECTION: "I WANT IT THAT WAAAAAY!"

…Silence.

Like dead, funeral, pin-drop silence.

We stood there, thinking we just ruined everything. But then—**CLAP. CLAP. CLAP.**

The crowd straight up **ERUPTED**.

Screaming. Cheers. People were throwing roses. Someone cried. Someone fainted. **WE DID IT. WE LEGIT DID IT.** I was already feeling like a pop star when a mic came flying out of nowhere. I caught it like a boss, dropped the other one like I was in a concert, and some dude yelled:

"SING US ANOTHER SONG!"

I exhaled like an overworked celebrity. "Oh boy…"

I was about to belt out *Bye Bye Bye* like my life was a 2000s boyband comeback tour—but then…

BANG.

I paused. Something slammed onto the roof. Real hard.

"Probs nothing," I thought. Until it happened again.

BOOM. Louder. Closer. This time, the crowd heard it too—heads turned, whispers grew. Then—

CRASH!

The casino doors BLEW OPEN like they got hit by a meteor. People screamed, chairs flipped, drinks flew. From the shadowy entrance stepped **pure, prehistoric nightmare fuel**.

The **Hydra**.

Nine dripping, snarling heads. Each one gnashing like it was starving. Thunder *screamed* overhead. Rain poured like a broken faucet in the sky. Lightning lit the beast like some demonic statue.

And then… it **snarled**.

EVERYONE FROZE. Then—**PANIC.**

People ran in every direction. Some fell. Some screamed. Some tried to hide under chairs like those would do anything. Then—

FWOOOOOM!!

One of the heads charged up and fired a fire beam that TORCHED half the room. Explosions lit up the casino like a war zone. Tables went flying. People were incinerated or hurled into walls like ragdolls. The Hydra went absolutely **feral**, wrecking everything in sight.

But then… its nine eyes locked onto me.

Game time.

I roared and transformed into my **Celestianite dragon form**, light purple energy flaring off my scales like lightning. I sprinted toward the beast, wings tucked tight. I was *tiny* compared to this dinosaur-from-Hell, but I didn't care—I LEAPT onto its back.

It bucked like a rodeo monster, slamming into walls and pillars, shaking so hard the chandeliers crashed down in a rain of sparks and shattered glass. I dug my claws in, slashing at its thick scales, trying to blind one of the heads. It ROARED in pain—then **snatched my tail** and FLUNG me like a skipping rock into the stage.

CRASHHHH!! I blew through speakers, light rigs, and pyrotechnics that accidentally went off, sending fireworks into the chaos. I shook it off, growled, and faced the beast again.

Round 2.

I launched forward, roaring with the force of a collapsing galaxy. It roared back, and we charged like freight trains. **BOOM.** We collided, and I TACKLED that thing so hard the floor cracked beneath us. One of its heads yanked me by the horn and SLAMMED me across three poker tables.

I flipped up, bleeding but furious. I ran at it again, jumped, and **CHOMPED** one of its throats. I tried to drag it down, but it was thrashing like crazy. I slashed one of its eyes—direct hit. The head screeched, but the Hydra swung me around and LAUNCHED me into a wall of slot machines.

Coins rained like confetti.

I roared again. It roared louder.

But I wasn't done.

I sprinted back, rage and energy crackling around me, and SMACKED one of its heads with my tail like a celestial baseball bat.

The impact sent that ugly lizard flying into a roulette table, breaking it in two.

And we weren't even CLOSE to done yet.

He crashed through the casino walls like a meteor, tumbling into the open. I roared, my jaws stretching wider than ever, and launched myself at him in a brutal pounce. Mid-air, I latched onto one of his necks, and we both slammed into the ground, rolling through the thunder-charged chaos of the night.

I sprang to my feet, just as he lunged at me with snapping jaws. I jerked my head back and clawed his face twice, deep and fast. One of his heads belched a torrent of fire, but I dodged to the side, sprinting with wild speed before leaping again. I clung to his back, teeth sinking in. My tail whipped violently side to side as he thrashed beneath me.

I dropped back to the ground, circling him with calculated fury, then lunged at his leg, biting down hard. He let out a guttural roar and smacked me away like a ragdoll. I smashed into a nearby building, crashing through walls and shattering light fixtures.

Before I could recover, he was already airborne, jaws clamping around my neck. He shot into the sky at breakneck speed, and we burst through the roof. At the peak, he let go—and I plummeted like a meteor.

But nah, I wasn't done.

With a blast of celestial energy, my wings flared and I rocketed back into the air. I blitzed past him, teeth raking across his flesh, then spun mid-air to clash with him again. My claws slashed his face, and my tail came around in a savage arc—*snap!*—his neck cracked.

Thunder BOOMED.

Lightning tore the sky in half.

Blood spilled from both our necks as we tore into each other, claws

flashing in the storm. I tail-whacked him so hard he spiraled toward the ground like a broken plane. I dove after him, grabbed one of his necks mid-flight, and bit down hard—*trying* to finish it—but the beast just wouldn't die.

He flailed and flung me off, but I twisted mid-air, spinning with light-speed intensity, celestial energy sparking around me like a storm incarnate. I slammed into the ground like a vortex bomb, the shockwave launching him backward.

He retaliated instantly—slamming into me, dragging me down. We rolled through the wreckage. He clawed my chest, grabbed my neck with one of his jaws, lifted me, and *SPLAT*—slammed me down with bone-shattering force.

I barely stood before he spun and tail-whipped me so violently I *heard* my neck pop. Still, I lunged back, jaws wide, clamping onto a neck—but he bit back, and the two of us were locked in this mutual, brutal chompfest.

Then he flung me like a toy, bashing his skull into mine mid-air. Blood sprayed from my face. I went flying into a museum, crashing through glass and walls, bones and ancient relics tumbling around me.

Now we were surrounded by fossilized giants.

The Hydra charged, eyes glowing an evil purple, and fired a beam of fire. I dodged hard to the right, skimming low. On all fours, I sprinted and launched myself onto his head, biting down with primal force.

He roared and slammed me into a T. rex fossil—*bones exploded everywhere.*

He flew again, grabbed me mid-air with another jaw, and body-slammed me into the wall—dust bursting out in a cloud. I leapt back onto his back, dashed along his spine, and clamped down with my jaws again, trying to take control. He thrashed like a maniac, crashing into every fossil in the room, until I slashed one of his eyes.

He flipped, launching me off. I landed hard into a triceratops fossil. Pain exploded through my body.

I growled and charged again, slamming into him sideways. He staggered—but caught my tail, spun me around like a ragdoll, and *YEETED* me across the museum. Glass shattered around me as I skidded to a stop.

Slowly, I got up—bruised, bloodied, but *burning* with rage.

He stalked toward me, bleeding and battered, spikes and bones embedded in his scales. I roared, primal and defiant.

He roared back.

We CLASHED.

He opened fire with rapid blasts—I juked left and right at max speed, bullets grazing past me. I pounced straight at his face, spinning, tail-whacking him mid-air—sending him crashing through a row of ancient armor.

He grabbed my neck and slammed me into another glass wall, but I rebounded and clawed his face, sparks flying as thunder shook the heavens again.

I unleashed a **celestial fire beam** right in his face—BOOM. The explosion sent him flying into the back of the museum, through layers of history and wreckage. I roared louder than ever, charging forward, firing more celestial blasts.

Each beam lit the place up, shaking the very walls.

He thrashed wildly, knocking over relics and getting caught in beams of light.

Then I rolled into a **celestial ball**, energy crackling as I spun faster, faster—then launched.

Mid-air, I burst from the ball form, screamed, and fired one last **massive** celestial beam—exploding the entire chamber in a radiant blast.

He got up slowly. Blood pouring. Bones impaled. Glass in his hide.

He was dying—but still standing.

We locked eyes.

Then—**BAM!** Outta nowhere, Ella, in her Desert Cat form (way bigger than expected btw), **pounced** from above, tearing into his back with claws and fangs. "*Leave him alone!*" she shouted, feral.

Olsen dropped in next in full Rockslide Ankylosaurus mode, chomping down on the Hydra's neck and *slamming* him to the floor.

Sophia, in her Musical Tiger form, joined Ella, double-teaming with a barrage of slashes and roars.

Prince zapped the monster mid-air, a blinding bolt of lightning striking him in the chest.

Archie dove in next. Then Angel. Then **Power**. One by one, everyone dropped from the sky like heroes in a final boss fight.

They all **piled on**, beating the beast into the floor.

And that's when I knew.

This was it.

With one final surge of strength, I dashed forward, jaws glowing with celestial fury. I *bit down* on one of the Hydra's necks—and *RIPPED IT CLEAN OFF.*

Blood sprayed everywhere. The head didn't grow back.

I dropped it.

It was over.

I shifted back to my regular form, panting, trembling. One by one, everyone else morphed back too.

I stared at the fallen beast. "What the heck *was* that?"

Prince, still sparking with electricity, shook his head. "I don't know, but whatever it was… it was *definitely* from the Lunaranites. I mean, look at it!"

And then—*fwump fwump fwump*—the sound of wings.

I looked up.

A full **Lunaranite army** soared through the storm clouds, spears raised, scanning the city.

I pulled my daggers free.

"We gotta get outta here. Now."

CH.10 The Nightmare

At Musicia (Rainy and Thunderous Atmosphere):

Lightning cracked across the stormy sky as I stared upward. The Lunaranites were already out, spears drawn, scanning the clouds for us.

"We gotta get outta here," I muttered through clenched teeth.

Prince shifted into his Lightning Bird form, electricity crackling around him.

"Where we even gonna go? If we fly, what about Sophia, Javier, Ella, and Olsen? They're land creatures!"

I turned to the squad. "Alright, we split up. You four stay grounded. Me, Power, Prince, Demaurion, Archie, and Angel—we take to the sky."

"But Don, isn't that *crazy* risky? The Lunaranites could find you guys!" Ella protested, worry thick in her voice.

I looked back up. They *were* already searching.

Then I looked down. *Come on, Don. You're the leader. You gotta get this right. She's not wrong. If we fly, it could end bad—but I'll take that risk. I have to.*

I turned back to her, eyes sharp with purpose. "We'll be fine."

I morphed into my dragon form, wings unfurling wide. Everyone else shifted into their beast forms. The rain came harder, the wind howled louder, more hostile by the second.

Then—boom—we launched.

The storm swallowed us whole. Lightning barely missed me as I pushed higher into the clouds. Archie flapped close, flames flickering wildly

around his Phoenix body. The winds howled, the thunder snarled like some ancient monster, and I had to dodge bolt after bolt like we were in some kind of aerial war zone.

"Dude, you *sure* we're gonna make it? This is hella dangerous," Prince called, voice shaking.

I didn't respond. I was locked in, brain locked on survival.

The Hydra ambush... that was Dreadixz. Or maybe... someone worse...

I tried to stay focused. Then I heard it—battle cries. Lunaranite Scouts. They were on us.

I spun my head—five of them, armored in silver, wings gleaming, spears glowing with violent intent.

"GET 'EM!" one shouted.

I flapped harder. "MOVE! We gotta get outta here!"

My instincts flared—I twirled, dodging a flying spear that whistled past my cheek.

No more playtime. I surged forward with everything I had, and the others followed.

Then—(BOOM!)—lightning *nailed* Archie. He shrieked and plummeted. "ARCHIE!" I screamed.

I dove beneath him, catching his falling body on my back. His flames flickered out—burned out. Now he was just a huge red bird, his Phoenix form dimmed.

But he was alive. I could hear his breath. Feel his heart.

I scanned the clouds for somewhere to land—nothing but storm.

Then, like a nightmare, a black figure riding a Lunaranite dragon slid up beside me. Dark energy coiled around him. Eyes glowing red. Feral. Focused.

"Tsk tsk tsk… well well *well*… what do we have here?" he sneered from the shadows.

"Who *are* you?!" I shouted through the storm.

He clenched his fists—dark energy cracked from his knuckles.

"You don't remember me? That's cold. I'm kinda famous, y'know… or at least I *was*."

He leapt off his dragon—*punched me in the face so hard*, I went flying down through the clouds.

"DON!" Prince screamed.

Archie slipped off my back. My wings buckled. My body quit.

No. No. No!

"I can't… I can't…"

Everything went dark.

5 Days Later – Eclitsic:

I snapped out of stasis. Ice cracked off my body. I looked around—icy wasteland. Flat terrain. Snowy igloos. Towering ice mountains. Blizzard winds screamed around me.

The sky was white with falling snow. I could barely see. I could barely hear. Snow piled high on the cliffs and frozen rocks, forming big soft mounds.

I was still in dragon form… but my wings?

I tried to fly—*instant pain*. Crashed back to the ground.

I looked—tiny ice spikes stuck to my wings. That's why I couldn't fly. I'd been in stasis too long—six days maybe?

I saw it—my own silhouette, shattered in the ice. *Yup, stasis for real.*

But no time to panic.

Find the beast. Then move to the next world. That's the plan.

Then—(CRASH)—a massive boom echoed.

My ears perked. My eyes locked on the source. I ran, even though the cold bit through my scales. Reached the edge of a cliff and—yo. I wasn't just on a frozen field. I was on a *tower*.

Down below?

Jocabed and Emely were fighting. Fighting *him*—the guy who *punched me into next week*. Or at least someone who *looked* like him.

Ice and snow clashed with shadow beasts. One lunged at Emely, snatching her by her trident and yeeting her across the ice.

Nope. Not standing by.

I morphed to base form. My hero suit clicked into place. Celestial energy surged through me, crackling bright.

I leapt from the cliff.

Energy trails flared behind me. I slammed into the field like a meteor. The shockwave shattered the air, knocking the monsters back and flattening the area.

I stood, hoodie flapping, breath steaming.

The enemy rose too—eyes glowing, hands twisted into claws, teeth sharp.

"Who *are* you?! Why are you hunting us?! I don't even *know* you!"

He smirked. "Alright, alright. Name's Incarceration. Villain name… *Insane X."*

My eyes widened. *Incarceration... the Zenith traitor. The fourth strongest. This is bad.*

I pulled out my daggers. Gripped them tight. Eyes locked.

I sprinted, blades behind me, flipped the dagger forward, spun—*slashed his cheek*.

Only a *drop* of blood came out.

He lunged. Right at me—he grabbed my body and hurled me across the frozen field like I was nothing.

As I flipped backward, I slammed onto the icy ground, skidding like a comet. I gritted my teeth, surged up, and infused celestial energy into my daggers while charging back at him like a blazing meteor. I slashed across his chest—blood sprayed out like fireworks—then slid on my heels and dashed in again.

I spin-dropped the dude with a crackling shockwave, but all it did was send him flying back a few miles. He skidded, stood up, and scoffed like it was a warm-up.

Snap.

"Hmph. You're pretty strong," Incarceration muttered, red eyes glowing, "but not strong ENOUGH."

His arm launched forward—and five shadowy chains exploded toward me, faster than thought. I dodged left, ducked right, teleporting between them like a blur. More came. I flickered around them, then reappeared right in front of him.

"50-50-50 CELESTIAL DROPKICK!"

My legs slammed into his chest, a celestial shockwave roaring from the impact as he tumbled across the battlefield, rolling like a busted wheel.

I holstered my daggers and charged again, energy snapping around me. Right hook—left hook—backhand to the face. I spun into a Galactical Uppercut, launching him into the sky, teleported above, and slammed him down hard into the frozen earth.

BOOM.

He got up, bloody and scarred, like nothing happened.

I blinked. "…Why aren't you fighting back?"

He laughed. Not a normal laugh. A vile, bone-chilling laugh. The snow around him cracked beneath his feet. His eyes flashed again.

"Don… you don't get it, do you?" he said, standing tall. "I'm not here to hurt you. I'm here to help."

I froze. "What are you talking about? You're a villain—not some motivational speaker!"

I hurled a celestial spear at him. He caught it mid-air and crushed it into atoms.

Then he blurred—bam bam!—two jabs and a spinning sidekick to my face. He grabbed my head, slammed me into the ground, spun, and launched me through an ice wall. I flew like a ragdoll, crashing through, ice shards raining down like glass.

He wrapped a chain around me, swung me like a flail.

Wind whistled past my ears. Everything spun. I was losing control. And then—

BOOM.

Dark energy erupted from him like a nuke, and suddenly, I was falling. Falling through complete nothingness. Just… black. Endless black.

Then—

SLAM.

I face-planted onto a cold, metallic floor. I groaned, pulling myself up—and saw nothing. Just darkness.

Until a million glowing red eyes blinked open above me.

Incarceration's voice echoed:
"You can't run, Don… you can't run from your past."

Suddenly, a massive bloody hand yanked me into the sky and hurled me through the void. I spun—and landed in my old 5th grade classroom.

"What the—WHAT'S GOING ON?! INCARCERATION! WHATEVER YOU'RE DOING, STOP IT!"

I looked around. There I was. Sitting at my desk. Pulling out my folder.

And then it hit me.

The old crush moment.

"No. No no no—NOT THIS—"

The scene played out. Everyone laughing. Me dying inside. And then I heard his voice again:

"I'm not DON-e yet…"

Another shadow hand smashed me through the floor—suddenly, the school dance. Cafeteria lights. I looked at the stage. Oh god.

It was the time I sang. Badly. In front of everyone.

I'd had fun at the time… but when I got back to class? Laughed at. Mocked. I clenched my fists.

"WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?!" I screamed.

No sign of him. Just his voice.

"Because… I'm trying to give you a recap."

Then it kept happening. Over and over. Memory after memory. All the embarrassing, painful ones. They swirled around me like ghosts in a storm. The void turned into soup—just… swirling shame and failure.

Incarceration's voice boomed again:

"YOU SEE THIS, DON?! YOU WERE A JOKE! LAUGHED AT! MOCKED BY YOUR FRIENDS! THAT'S WHAT THEY REALLY THINK OF YOU!"

"They were KIDS! They didn't mean it like that!" I shouted back. "They're my friends! It's just how they are!"

"RIGHT! RIGHT! When they LAUGH at you, when they EMBARRASS you, when they YELL at you for messing up—that's friendship?! You still call that loyalty?!"

"I'LL PROVE THEM WRONG! I'LL BECOME THE CELESTIANITE LEADER—I'M NOT WEAK!"

A pause.

Then Incarceration's voice, chillingly low:

"…No. I mean show them the other way."

I blinked. "Other way?"

Silence. Then—

"I want you to kill them."

"WHAT?!" I shouted, face twisted in horror. "NO! I'M NOT KILLING MY FRIENDS!"

"Very well," he whispered darkly.

Suddenly, I heard something whistling from the sky.

I looked up.

An AXE was inches from splitting my skull in half—

(In a Snowy Igloo at Eclitsic):

"AH!"

I shot up off the mat like I'd been blasted by a rocket—light speed, no chill. Huffing and puffing like I just ran a marathon in the Arctic.

I glanced around. Yep, small igloo vibes, walls made of those icy blue blocks that look like they belong in a winter wonderland ad. Outside, the sun was shining like it was flexing, crystal-clear blue sky with zero clouds crashing the party.

Penguins waddled outside, snow glittering like it was sprinkled with diamonds. I reached to check myself—no stab wounds, no leaks. Hero suit still fresh, clean, and intact. *Relief.exe* activated. Must've been a nightmare.

Then Jocabed , slid in—she's the mixed-skin girl rocking long hair and a snowy blue sweatshirt, Arctic Fox vibes with those ears and tail on point. She gave me the classic side-eye.

"Bout time, you've been snoozing forever," she said.

I blinked, still a little dazed. "Wait, what? Everyone's here? Prince, Demaurion, Archie, Olsen, Ella, Angel, Power—all of them? And Incarceration isn't around? He didn't pop up and start throwing down with you or Emely?"

- **Emely** — Ice Elemental Frozenanite
- *Talks too much, nonstop chatterbox. Hyperactive and fun, but cold when it counts.*
- **Jocabed** — Blizzard Element Frozenanite
- *Shy but real when it counts. Quiet power, lets her skills do the talking.*

Before Jocabed could answer, Emely strolled in, rocking a green fluffy jacket, frog hat, glasses, and clutching her trident like a boss. Mixed skin and long hair, too—she's basically winter's hype girl. She gave me a raised eyebrow and said,

"What are you talking about? Incarceration? No clue. That whole

'Incarcer-who' thing is news to me. But the rest? Yeah, they're already outside waiting for you. They've been hyped to see you after five days of total isolation—and—"

She kept rambling, words flying like snowflakes caught in a blizzard.

Jocabed cut in, "Don, you good? You've been tossing and turning since you woke. Where did you even hear about this Incarceration dude?"

Wait… HUH?

"You don't know who Incarceration is? He literally attacked us HOURS ago! Where am I? Why am I here? I was falling through some dark void!" I blurted out, voice rising.

Both of them exchanged looks like I just landed from another planet. Jocabed opened her mouth, hesitating, "Don, I think you need to rest…"

Hold up—no way. They *have* to be hallucinating.

I'm 99.9% sure I saw Incarceration. I *definitely* fell through a void after going toe-to-toe with him. And I'm *super* sure I crashed into the icy depths of Eclitsic, freezing solid for five whole days.

Wait—am I losing it? Or was all of that just some crazy nightmare? Did that Hydra fight even *happen*?

Shaking off the fog, I stood up, stepped out of the igloo, and headed straight for training.

Maybe… just maybe, I gotta stop overthinking all this and focus on leveling up my moves.

Yeah, maybe it was just a nightmare…

CH.11 The Frozen Temple

At Foreshade, King Dreadixz's Kingdom

"YEAH! YES YES YES! So *this* was all just some next-level tactical genius move? You're a straight LEGEND, Incarceration!" Dreadixz clapped, totally hyped.

A sly smirk crept onto Incarceration's lips. "I know, I know. Appreciate the honor… But the plan's not finished yet. He still has to take the bait. And he's young—if he falls for it, the whole prophecy could get *messy* once he evolves into something unstable."

"We crushed the first step—the Hydra attack. Then we planted memories from his past. Now, the real work begins. This next phase? Gonna take some time, sir."

At Eclitsic

I slammed the final celestial punch into an ice wall, and *bam*—it shattered into a million icy shards scattering everywhere.

"Yo, looks like I'm getting stronger," I said, eyeballing my fists. Guess that means a fresh moveset is on the horizon.

This old one? Kinda stale now. But now that I'm leveling up, new tricks, here I come.

Crunching through soft snow, I headed toward the igloo where everyone chilled. Wanna know what's weird?

My wings are still frozen solid. Thought that was just some nightmare.

I plopped down next to Ella. Silence was heavy around us, until she

broke it, "Hey, what's up? Since the Hydra fight, you've been off."

Should I spill the tea about Incarceration and his "kill all your friends" vibes? She knows Insane X and would definitely help calm me down… but nah. I gotta keep this on the DL for now.

Whispering, "No, I'm fine…" But honestly? It *hurts.*

Memories keep playing on loop like the worst nightmare remix. People used to see me as a clown—some joke just for their entertainment. But now? Maybe they see me as brave, or even a hero.

It's hard to ignore the stuff you wanna forget. It always comes back like a boomerang when you try to toss it away.

But here's the trick—if bad memories won't bounce away, sometimes *you* gotta leave them behind.

Focus on *now,* on the future. That's what really matters. "Guys, guess what!" Jocabed burst in, eyes sparkling.

Sophia rolled hers, "What is it, fox girl?"

"There are Power Gems in the Frozen Temple! So, we're all going through it!"

Power immediately spit out his drink, "WAIT, WE'RE GOING *WHERE*?!"

"Nah, no way! Y'all gotta be crazy if we're heading into the Frozen Temple!" Olsen yelled.

We all shot Olsen deadpan looks, then I broke the silence, "Bro, you literally dance for no reason."

"That's different!" Olsen snapped back.

"Enough! We're going to the Frozen Temple *because I said so*," Demaurion declared.

I shook my head, "You're trippin' if you think that's a good idea. That's a death wish."

"For real. Remember what happened to the last explorers? They *died,*" Archie added.

Angel stepped up, "Look, if we're after the Power Gems, it's worth the risk. It could give the prophecy a major boost."

We all exchanged looks, then nodded.

"Yeah, sounds good."

"Sure."

"Why not."

"Cool."

"Good enough."

"We're the Chosen Ones—why not?"

"Can't wait to die today!"

"Alright, the Frozen Temple's just north of here. We're in the middle of Eclitsic, so it's gonna be a long trek," Emely said, eyes on the map.

"Gimme that!" Ella snatched the map and studied it. "Three hours. Not thrilled."

"Power Gems though… We don't know how many, but the plural 'Gems' means more than one. Worth it," Javier reassured me.

Sophia popped her headphones on, "Let's move before dark."

"DARK?!" I yelled.

"Yeah, dark *in Eclitsic* is a whole other nightmare. Not just night, I mean pitch-black, no stars, no moon—nothing. You know I'm terrified of 'dark dark,' right?!"

"Stop being a baby, Don. It's just pitch black. No big deal," Sophia smirked.

I nodded *very* sarcastically, "Yeah, sure, Sophia. No crying when it's darker than the abyss. Totally fine! Right, guys?"

"Let's quit wasting time and move before it gets worse," Power said.

We all got up and stepped out of the cave.

And that's when the real adventure began.

The sky was a wild mix of purple, orange, and blue. The sun put on a show, lighting the world as a blizzard started to kick up. Wind howled, snow drifted.

We trekked over white snow and ice, past jagged rock mountains dusted with snow.

The ground was slippery, but thankfully my boots were solid. Huge ice spikes jutted out from the frozen earth, glowing icy blue.

We crossed a frozen lake and entered a yeti town.

Yeti town was wild—huts built by yetis, a full society of these massive white-furred giants with wooden horns, beards, sharp teeth, and giant maces.

The blizzard got harsher. I wrapped my wings tight for warmth.

The sun vanished.

Then *nothing.* No moon, no stars. Just pitch-black darkness.

This is Eclitsic at night—absolute void.

It got so dark I couldn't see a thing. My tail glowed purple: fear.

Yeah, I'm twelve, but I still freak out in the dark. You never know what's hiding in the shadows. Reality gets weird, and the fear creeps in.

I shivered but kept walking.

If I wanna lead the Celestianites and fulfill even one-fifth of the prophecy, I gotta face my fears—just like back in Musicia's casino.

After what felt like forever, we made it—thanks to Ella's night vision and navigation skills.

The temple was massive—no way to really describe it, but it was huge.

Built from slick, solid ice blocks, like a towering palace. Not cramped, but wide and spacious.

At the very top, an owl silhouette was carved and perched like a guardian.

The entrance was a giant pitch-black door.

Ella described it after peeking inside.

We stepped in.

I couldn't see much until Sophia lit up the place with a lamp.

It was stunning—just a long, narrow road of white and blue ice stretching ahead.

To my left and right, thick frozen walls stood far apart.

Above, icy stalactites hung from the ceiling, dripping water.

"This. Is. Phenomenal," I breathed.

Far ahead, a huge rectangular door encased in ice waited.

To reach it, we had to cross a rickety bridge.

Suddenly, ice shards cracked and shattered above us, sending satisfying snaps and cracks echoing.

Jocabed turned serious, "Listen up—the legend of the Eclitsic Queen.

They say she's still alive… but transformed into the Owl Griffin."

A mysterious beast rumored to haunt this temple.

"Watch out for weird hoots. Some call her… Mysterious Loose."

We started across the bridge.

I asked, "For real, how did Queen Frost become Mysterious Loose? What happened?"

Olsen sighed, "She got obsessed with hooting during the war. Celestianites and Lunaranites fought here, and she cheered on the Celestianites with a 'hoot' every day."

"Avangard legend says if you hoot for more than 365 days straight, you turn into the beast you fear the most."

"So after 365 days, she became the Glacier Loose—a beast extinct for 35 million years."

Power smirked, "Back before Avangard was a thing, I actually befriended one near where Eclitsic is now."

I groaned, "Dude, we get it. You're ancient."

Olsen kept going, "She went feral—no memories, just pure animal instincts. Now she kills anyone who steps into her temple."

Ella added, "Who made this legend? Probably Lunaranites or maybe one of the Zeniths. They control everything: Power, Strength, Speed, Regeneration, Intelligence, Liberation, Incarceration, Love, and Anger."

We passed through the door and saw huge icy blue stairs stretching down.

Snow cracked and icicles shattered as we descended.

Then *I* slipped.

Sliding on my back, I tried to stop, but no luck. Ice's friction was zero.

"DON!" someone yelled as I skidded across, bouncing off rocks.

I slammed hard into a massive ice boulder, flying over it.

Then *crash*—I hit the ground hard and slowly got back up… I don't know how but, we're outside for some reason. I looked up, and the sky was covered by dark gray clouds that had snow rapidly passing by at light speed. There was a blizzard, and there was so much snow that it was hard for me to see. I put on my dragon hoodie, and it was much better.

The sounds of the wind roaring through the vigorous atmosphere across the place. I realized that I was standing on top of a really high and steep mountain covered in complete white snow. Then my suit was about to get absolutely buried in snow thanks to the raging blizzard. Everyone else was right behind me, chasing after like a pack. "Slow down!" I yelled, but nah—they just went full speed and face-planted. Classic.

We all peered down, eyes wide—because yeah, that mountain was steep and freakin' high. From way below, something weird caught my eye: a shadowy figure standing at the bottom. The snow was messing with my vision, so I couldn't tell who it was at first. I triggered my Overview ability, then glanced back down again. Squinting harder, the realization hit me like a punch in the gut—I *really* messed up.

The figure morphed into a massive white Lunaranite Dragon, and it locked eyes on us. Immediate duck and cover behind a snow-covered rock. I slowly peeked out—he was *still* staring. Then came the snarl, deep and menacing, followed by a roar that sounded like a lion and a spinosaurus had a vocal baby.

No doubt, it saw us. It *knew* we were there. And me? I *knew* we were so done for.

The Lunaranite unleashed a blazing white lunar beam straight at our rock. "GET DOWN!" I shouted, urgency dripping from every word.

We dove out just in time. The blast hit the rock, sending a shockwave that obliterated it and hurled us flying in every direction off the mountain.

I was just free-falling through the blizzard with zero control when—bam!—the dragon dove right at me and suddenly transformed into Dark Don, punching me so hard I flew backward. "WHAT THE—!" I yelled, stunned.

"Yeah, I promised I'd come get you!" he shouted back, flexing an arm glowing with lunar energy before zooming toward me at light speed.

We clashed, energies colliding in a wild back-and-forth, boosting at each other again and again. I got knocked back, then surged forward with a punch. Dark Don dropped back to the ground, trailing lunar energy, hit by my blow.

I slammed down, landing with a celestial shockwave that kicked up the wind, my hoodie flapping behind me as I pulled it on. "Alright, you ready? Listen, Dark Don—don't waste my time. I've got Power Gems to collect, and the next beast to fight," I said, fists clenched and daggers drawn.

I infused my blades with celestial energy. Dark Don crossed his arms, eyes closed. "I dare you to come at me with *all* you've got."

Of course, he swapped out his other arm for lunar energy. This fight was about to get brutal. Spreading his wings, he charged at me at lightning speed. Instinct kicked in—I dodged sideways and slashed. Blood spilled as he tumbled back, then he sprang up and charged, now wielding a dual-bladed lunar sword.

He twirled and spun, aiming a deadly slash at my head, but I blocked with lightning-fast daggers. He switched his blade to attack my side—I ducked just in time. Time to go wild.

Until Dark Don slapped the blade across my face, sending a lunar shockwave that slammed me like a tumbleweed across the ground.

I got up, slid back, then charged forward, daggers ready. I leapt onto a huge ice wall and launched myself at him. He charged a lunar blast, but I flipped over him, flicking him with such force the shockwave sent him tumbling across the ice.

Landing, I ran at him, celestial energy crackling all over. I tried slashing his chest, but he dodged and lunged. Ducking his blade, I spun mid-air and fired off a "CELESTIAL AERIAL KICK," hitting him square in the face.

He crashed through the ice wall, lunar energy igniting it into a massive explosion that shattered the whole thing.

Dark Don boosted at me again, landing with a shockwave that sent me sprawling. Then he skated at me on rocket shoes, grabbed my collar, and hurled me across the field.

I scrambled up just in time as he teleported in front of me and hit me with a high kick that sent me airborne. As I fell, he teleported above and axe-kicked me down with a thunderous *CRASH*.

But he wasn't done. He rushed me with a rapid flurry of punches

engulfed in lunar energy, finishing with a devastating blow that sent me flying through the air.

I slammed into a rock, pain radiating through my body. Dark Don teleported right back in front of me and hurricane-kicked me sideways. I ate snow hard on the landing.

He appeared again, and as I got up, he threw two left hooks, a right hook, and finished with a spinning lunar uppercut to my face. He spun rapidly, doing his own version of Spin Drop, and the shockwave sent me skidding back.

Celestial energy crackled as I charged, slashing left and right. He dodged everything, so I side-flipped over him and landed behind, ready to strike—but he spun around and blocked with his blade.

"This fight's kinda slow. Wanna crank it up?" I smirked.

Dark Don's eyes glowed. "You're on."

We dropped our weapons and went full throttle, faster than lightning, trading blows like exploding stars. We launched into the air, colliding with a shockwave, then started boxing—rapid punches and kicks flying everywhere.

I roundhouse kicked him into the air. He zoomed back at me like a lunar blur, threw a left hook—I dodged, grabbed his arm, and drop-kicked him down.

He flew back up like a lunar star, and I shot off like a celestial one.

The blizzard howled around us, whipping snow and wind so thick it blurred everything, but I already knew how this fight was gonna play out. No surprises here.

I blasted toward him at max speed, throwing a sharp left hook right to his jaw, then followed up with a devastating uppercut that rattled his face. He shook it off like it was nothing—typical.

His fist shot toward me next, but I blocked it with my arm and spun on a dime, launching a swift aerial kick. He got blasted backward like a lightning strike, only to rocket back at me mid-air.

The combo came fast: backhand, left hook, right hook, another backhand, then an uppercut. Before I could react, he grabbed me, spun

me around like a ragdoll, and slammed me straight into the mountain.

I crashed through the rocky face, jagged and brutal, and he was already racing toward me, his eyes crackling with lunar energy.

I tried to launch myself free, but he caught me just in time—clamping his hand around my neck and slamming me down so hard the mountain shattered beneath us.

I powered up, blasted forward with a punch that sent him flying, then dove in again with a spinning kick—he ducked.

Without missing a beat, I teleported right in front of him, punched his chest, and followed with a right hook that sent him crashing to the other side.

Like a hawk locking onto prey, I flew at him full speed and spun into a celestial hurricane kick. He tried to block it, but the shockwave smashed him into the ground.

He landed hard, face buried in the snow. I dropped from above like a meteor impact, slamming down beside him with a shockwave that sent him flying upward.

I caught his arm mid-air, spun him like a baseball, and hurled him through the sky. He flipped wildly, like a water bottle in a viral challenge.

Teleporting in front of him, I struck his gut with an earth-shattering Celestial Strike.

The impact unleashed a massive shockwave that tossed ice and snow into the air, creating a chaotic roar of distortion.

The wind sliced through the wreckage as mountains crumbled and ice towers fell. When the dust and smoke cleared, the devastation revealed a massive crater beneath me as I hovered above.

Crossing my arms, I looked down at Dark Don with a cocky smirk.

"You tried… and you still failed. Funny, huh? You beat me once and thought you were some kind of badass. But guess what? The tables flipped, Dark Don. Completely."

He smirked, eyes glowing with lunar energy, and retorted, "You're just a fool with too much confidence. But don't get comfortable—I'll beat you for the second time."

Before I could reply, he teleported away.

The blizzard raged on around me. I glanced around, voice low and cautious: "Where is everybody?"

CH.12 Attack of the Mysterious Loose

I trudged through the soft, crunching snow, the wind whipping flakes across my hood as the blizzard blurred everything in sight. I kept my head down, hood up—just enough protection to last a few more hours in this deadly cold.

My wings looked normal again. Maybe those strange ice crystals finally melted off.

The wind howled around me, cold seeping into my bones.

"Geez, it's freezing," I muttered, shivering hard.

Visibility was trash. I couldn't spot my friends anywhere through the swirling whiteout.

I climbed a small hill of snow and looked out. Still nothing. Just stone and ice. "Was the temple really that small?" I mumbled. "Or… am I still in it?" I scanned the horizon again and spotted it—a long, narrow frozen lake stretching between the snowbanks. My eyes widened.

I knew exactly where I was.

We'd been heading south through Eclitsic. That meant this was the Frozen Lakes. A place the Leviathan rarely visits… but not *never*. Fantastic. Half the group could be monster chow by now.

And that's when I realized—I wasn't alone.

A deep hooting echoed across the icy expanse.

I spun around. Nothing but snow and stone. My breath steamed in the frigid air.

"Who the heck was that?" I asked aloud.

The hooting came again—louder this time. Loud enough to rattle the

ground and ring in my ears.

Then I saw it.

A massive owl-griffin hybrid, white as the snowstorm around it, stared me down from above. Mysterious Loose.

I drew my daggers fast—faster than your dad in the delivery room. I smirked up at the beast.

"I thought you were a myth. Figured Queen Frost was dead. But no… some stories are real after all."

It snarled, furious, and launched at me with a roar. An ice beam shot from its mouth. I rolled sideways, the blast shattering into jagged icicles across the snow.

Now I understood how this thing earned its legend.

It skidded forward, snow spraying from its talons, then lunged again. I ducked under its sweep and charged, slashing at its wing. Blood sprayed, staining the snow.

It shrieked and fired another beam. I slid beneath it, coming up swinging. It flew at me, claws extended, but I caught one talon with my dagger and spun, slicing it clean off.

It shrieked again, swiping wildly. I rolled beneath its wing, sidestepped, then leapt—twirling midair like a celestial vortex. Energy cracked around me. I slashed its neck as I passed.

Landing in a skid, I dashed forward, faster than a spam-clicker in a boss fight. My daggers flashed in every direction, confusing the beast. I jumped straight at its face and transformed—spinning into a celestial AERIAL KICK right between the eyes.

It spiraled backward, crashing through a mountain.

I landed, celestial light blazing from my eyes, blood-drenched daggers at my sides. It screeched, wings flaring wide, and launched at me, mouth glowing with the biggest ice beam I'd ever seen.

"Alright then," I said, grinning. "Do your worst."

I sprinted at light speed, dodging the beam in slow motion. I ran along a mountainside, flipped off the edge, and landed in a snowy slide.

It dove for me, trying to knock away my blades. I leaned back, dodging

the strike, and we clashed—darting around each other in a blur of motion.

I parried every talon swipe, my dagger flowing like water. Then it charged another blast. Perfect.

I grabbed an ice board and flipped forward, sliding fast, snow flying. I veered right, climbing up the side of an ice wall. It fired—the beam slicing the space where I'd just been.

I leapt off the wall, grabbed the board midair, and landed back in motion. As it fired again, I hurled the board into the beam. The ice blast froze it solid.

That's when I made my move.

I ran, daggers glowing with celestial energy. Its eyes widened. Too late. I twirled, leapt, spun like a vortex—and sliced clean through its neck.

Its head flew free. I landed in a skid, blood spraying like a fountain.

Done. One beast down. Plenty more to go. And I was definitely stronger now.

I looked up. The blizzard hadn't let up—snow falling harder than ever. Typical for Eclitsic.

Couldn't tell if it was day or night. The clouds were too thick.

"Ouch!" I winced, grabbing my arm. A sharp pain stung deep. "Seriously? A blister?"

Time to find shelter.

I wandered through hills, over lakes, past frozen rivers. Finally, I found it—an arch-shaped cave dusted with fresh snow, tucked into a forest of icy trees. Some bare, some still clinging to leaves.

The forest clung to the side of a snow-covered mountain. Creatures roamed—Hrics, Uragas, Ice Bears, even Frozen Dragons.

I stepped into the cave. Warmth hit me like a blanket. I didn't even need my wings to stay warm.

Squeak!

I froze. Ears twitching. Nothing.

Squeak.

Curious now. I stepped back—then felt something tug my tail.

I turned.

A Hric.

Small, bunny-sized, with fluffy ears like clouds and bright red eyes. It had sharp, almost elegant teeth and a pointed tail twitching like a rabbit's.

"Hey there," I said softly, waving.

It tilted its head and squeaked again. Odd. Aren't Hrics usually aggressive?

This one just walked up. Harmless.

I glanced around the cave. "This your place? Sorry, didn't mean to intrude. Just needed shelter from the storm."

It chirped and turned back inside. Then it paused, looked back, and chirped again.

"…You're inviting me in?" I asked.

I crawled in after it, leaning against the wall. The Hric bounced around the cave.

That's when I noticed the egg—white, striped with green dots—tucked near the edge.

Definitely not a Hric egg.

"Is that a lizard egg?" I asked. "Why haven't you eaten it?"

The Hric chirped again—almost like a laugh—and shook its head.

I stared. A peaceful Hric. Protective. Strange.

"Then why do you have it?"

It hugged the egg close, chirping softly.

Time for a trick I rarely use. Celestianite mind-read.

Burns energy, sure. But I needed answers.

Its thoughts were clear: it had found the egg, lost and alone. It just wanted to protect it.

I smiled. "You should return it. Just in case the mother's out there."

The Hric nodded and started to roll the egg out. Then it saw my daggers and froze—terrified. It curled into a trembling snowball.

"Hey, don't be scared," I said, reaching out. "I'm not gonna hurt you."

It peeked out, still wary.

"I'm one of the good guys. A chosen one. I help people. I slay monsters. You protected that egg. That's heroic."

It slowly uncurled. I reached forward and touched its nose.

A surge of warmth shot through me.

I petted it gently. "Name's Don. Don the Celestianite. What about you? Don't have a name, huh?"

It purred.

"How about… Kai?"

It bounced in joy.

I chuckled. "Kai it is."

Outside, the storm had passed. The snow lay still, piled high. Trees stood silent. Stars shimmered in a clear night sky. The moon cast silver light over the peaceful forest.

Finally, calm returned to Eclitsic.

I curled up in my wings. Kai snuggled against my tail.

"Goodnight, Kai," I whispered.

CH.13 The Next Phase

Incarceration wandered through the desolate forest, where silence reigned and the air felt haunted. Darkness coiled between the gnarled black trees, and a thin mist drifted lazily in the breeze. The wind whispered like a tired ghost, brushing past him as he walked.

Distant screams echoed—twisted wails of Lunaranite spirits—and he smirked in amusement. Each step he took squelched against the soaked earth, as if the forest floor hadn't dried in a thousand years.

The howls of lurking beasts hummed through the air. Then came a loud, distorted screech—a sound that felt too evil to be natural. Incarceration's glowing red eyes snapped toward the noise, and his smirk deepened.

He changed course.

The deeper he walked, the worse the forest became. Tall, moss-draped grass concealed ancient Lunaranite skulls, cracked and forgotten. The foul howl came again—closer, rawer, more unhinged. He was getting warm.

Then the final cry rang out.

He didn't need to hear another. He was already close.

Incarceration's jagged grin gleamed in the moonlight, his sharp teeth catching the pale glow.

"Vironos… I know you're here. Out… now…"

Something rustled nearby.

A creature emerged from a leafless bush—slow and deliberate. A massive wolf, its body a swirling mass of black mist, stepped forward. Its eyes blazed a murderous light blue, tendrils of energy curling out from them like smoke. It stood atop a crooked wooden arch and stared Incarceration

down.

The wolf hissed,

"So… King of Nightmares, huh? Yet you don't even got a kingdom. No throne. No people. Just your ego."

"Why are you slithering through my domain?"

Incarceration sighed, irritated.

"Because, Vironos, I need a favor. Awaken your soldiers."

Vironos growled, then let out a sharp bark of disbelief.

"Incarceration… You KNOW me and my crew are ILLEGAL. I-L-L-E-G-A-L."

"We're not allowed to engage the Illegals. And we sure as hell can't touch anything tied to that cursed prophecy."

He wasn't wrong. Vironos and his legion were known as the *Illegals*. Forbidden for multiple reasons:

1. They bore two beast traits simultaneously—considered unnatural and unstable.
2. Their Elements were banned across all of Foreshade.
3. Despite their brutal strength and combat experience, they were barred from war due to trust issues. They lied. They betrayed. They killed without reason.

Incarceration stepped forward and gently patted Vironos on the head, grinning slyly.

"Look, these Chosen Ones? They need to die. Now. You and your army—you're the *next phase*. And if that flops… well, I've already got a backup."

Vironos stepped back, ears twitching uneasily. He turned his gaze behind him—toward a row of enormous, ancient cocoon-like eggs. They were gray and stone-hard, sealed shut for years.

He exhaled slowly.

"Awaken my forbidden friends…"

A low *crack* rang out.

One egg split, then another, and another, until all of them trembled with life. From the first shell burst a towering creature—an Ankylodocus hybrid, its long neck stretching above the trees, armored like a tank. Its tail ended in a massive club, ready to flatten anything in its way.

Then the rest hatched.

Vironos shifted into his Drake form, unleashing a roar that shook the forest. The hybrid's metallic plating gleamed under the moonlight, shielding its body like a fortress.

Next came a blood-red Kraken, slime oozing from its massive tendrils.

Then an Azure Phoenix erupted from the flames of its egg, screeching with a voice like shattered glass.

Electricity cracked the sky as a Magnetic Gyrfalcon emerged, red and blue magnetic electricity dancing across its eyes.

And finally, from the trees themselves, a massive Scorpion crawled forward—its body rusted, its claws twitching like they had a thirst for blood.

Incarceration raised an eyebrow and chuckled.

"Didn't expect the scorpion to come. But hey, I'll take her."

Vironos introduced them one by one.

"Dark Olsen, the Metallicslide Ankylodocus. Dark Prince, the Magnetic Gyrfalcon. Dark Archie, the Azure Phoenix. Dark Demaurion, the Bloody Kraken. Dark Ella, the Rusty Scorpion. Or just call them… Ironz, King, Azure, Darn, and Rusty."

- **Ironz (Dark Olsen)** — Metal Element
- *Opposite of Olsen: cold, ruthless, calculating.*
- **King (Dark Prince)** — Magnet Electricity Element
- *Opposite of Prince: serious, deadly focused.*
- **Darn (Dark Demaurion)** — Blood Element
- *Opposite of Demaurion: controlled, sinister.*
- **Azure (Dark Archie)** — Azure Element
- *Opposite of Archie: cold, methodical chaos.*
- **Vironos (Dark Eli)** — Glitch Element

- *Opposite of Eli: glitchy, unpredictable, erratic.*

He turned to them all.

"It's time for the mission you've waited lifetimes for…

It's murder time."

At Eclitsic (Daytime)

I woke up with this weird, gnawing feeling in my gut. The kind you get when you just *know* something's off—like the blizzard hit again. Pretty sure that's just a Tuesday here in Eclitsic, but hey, still unnerving. And honestly, it rarely happens at night, so yay for small blessings?

I glanced over to see if Kai was awake. One of his long ears twitched while he snoozed, like a big, snowy bunny with teeth. Nope, out cold. Guess he'll be sleeping for a while. I turned back toward the cave opening—

—and jumped out of my skin.

ALL my friends were sitting in a tight circle around me like I was some kind of sleeping exhibit at the zoo.

"WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING HERE?! AND WHERE HAVE YOU EVEN BEEN?!" I shrieked, flailing like a startled cat.

Angel, who was casually tinkering with some random device (probably dangerous), replied, "Oh yeah, we all found each other. Then we followed a trail of blood from your daggers after you, y'know… murdered Mysterious Loose."

I blinked. "You *what* now—"

Then I remembered. Oh. Right. That happened.

Shaking my head, I turned to look at Kai. He still hadn't met the crew. Gently, I picked him up, thankful he was still snuggled in dreamland.

"Guys, meet Kai!" I beamed, showing them the adorable snowy-white Hric like he was Simba on Pride Rock.

The moment they saw him, everyone collectively lost their *minds*. Full-on panic mode. Screaming. Scrambling. Pure chaos in a cave the size of a

walk-in closet.

Archie banged his head on the wall. Jocabed tried to tunnel through the snow like she was in *Minecraft*.

"CALM DOWN!" I shouted over the madness. "He's *friendly*! He's not like the other Hrics!"

Demaurion immediately pulled out his trident and aimed it at Kai's face. "IF THAT THING BITES ME, I'M GONNA KILL IT!"

I snatched the trident out of his hands. "No, no, no! We are *not* killing anyone today. Kai's different. He let me stay in his cave, protected an egg that wasn't even his, then gave it up to reunite it with its mom. He's good. Trust me."

Slowly, the panic simmered down.

Kai yawned and stretched, finally waking up to the circus happening around him. He blinked at everyone, scanned their faces one by one… then *zoomed* out of my arms and *leapt* onto Olsen's head like a spring-loaded squirrel.

He bounced around on Olsen's noggin like it was a trampoline.

"I think he likes you," I chuckled.

Emely immediately launched into a ramble, "Okay, so this little carnivorous Hric is *suddenly* not a threat to Elementanite-kind just because he was nice to you for five minutes and now you think we should all be okay with that and then you just decide he's basically your pet now and—"

Yeah. We were all ignoring her at this point.

The snow outside howled like a banshee, muffling everyone's voices. I laid back on the cold stone floor and stared at the ceiling, letting my thoughts wander. Then a question hit me like a snowball to the face.

I turned to Angel. "Wait a sec. If you've got portal powers, why haven't you been using them to take us all over Avangard in, like, five seconds? We could be done with the prophecy already!"

Angel sighed like a guy who'd heard this a million times. "Because the prophecy doesn't allow it."

"Didn't Vigilzante make that prophecy? What did *he* say about it?" I pressed, staring at him.

Angel pushed up his glasses dramatically. "He said portal users *cannot* assist the Chosen Ones by teleporting them across Avangard. It's in an ancient scroll I read back at Insane Middle."

"Ohhh, okay, so teleporting is considered cheating. Got it." Makes sense… sort of.

The girls fawned over Kai like he was a living plush toy. Meanwhile, the boys busted out a relic of the past: a game called **Stellar Ball**. Apparently, Power used to play this way back when the galaxy was still forming. Old-school stuff.

You needed at least ten players. The goal? Eliminate each other using a card-based battle system. There were five different Elemental cards, one of each per player. A 10-sided die decided who went first.

Then the fight started. Play a card. Choose your opponent. If you won, they were out. If they beat you? You were toast.

Each element had strengths and weaknesses. It went something like this:

- **Fire** < Water | > Ice, Magma, Plants, Light
-
- **Lightning** < Water | > Fire, Plant, Magma, Ice, Light
-
- **Earth** < Celestial, Time, Lunar | > basically everything else
-
- **Water** < Earth, Celestial, Lunar, Time | > most other Elements
-
- **Magma** < *everything* | > just Plant
-
- **Plant** < literally everything, lol
-

(I should really stop before this becomes a textbook.)

Also, you couldn't show your cards. Strategic mystery and all that jazz.

I whipped out a **Time** card. A rare one. I felt unstoppable.

Then Prince, *that smug lightning turkey*, slammed a **Lunar** card on mine like he just dropped the mic.

"HOW—WHERE—WHAT?!" I shrieked.

Prince smirked. "You've never seen a Lunar card before? Limited edition. Also shiny."

I narrowed my eyes. "Oh yeah? You sure about that, *boy*?"

I pulled out my **Celestial** card and slapped it down on his Lunar like I was flipping the script of destiny.

Prince's face? Pure horror.

"NOOOOOOOOOOO!!!" he wailed.

"Out you go, buddy." I grinned.

Olsen facepalmed so hard I felt it in my soul. "Nothing beats Celestial. UGH!"

"Yup, Don wins. Lucky Celestial user," Archie grumbled.

Demaurion flipped the whole deck in fury. "I'LL KILL YOU, DON!"

I kicked back, smug as ever. "What can I say? Celestial Champ in the house." I even busted out a little victory tail-shake dance.

And that's when the *ground* decided to join the party by **violently vibrating**.

I froze.

"…Does anyone else feel that?!"

Ella looked up, clutching Kai. "I hear it too—wait. I think it's an avalanche!"

Oh no.

The cave *split open* at the top, and rocks the size of soccer balls started dropping like celestial bowling balls. I threw my wings over my head.

"LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!!"

We *bolted* out of the cave and into the icy wilderness, the earth *roaring* behind us. Sure enough, a full-on avalanche was tearing down the mountain. Trees flattened like paper. Snow boulders the size of trucks rained down from above.

"RUNNNNN!" I screamed, my voice fighting through the chaos.

As we darted through the trees, the forest being obliterated around

us. They started falling from the top—straight at us—and more just kept coming, like a full-blown army.

We all bolted, sprinting through the forest clinging to the mountain's edge as the thunderous cracks of ice shattering chased behind us. Trees around us were obliterated like twigs, and while I was running, I noticed something.

I glanced down—my feet flying—and saw it: thin fractures splitting the ground.

I skidded to a stop.

My eyes lifted just in time to watch the avalanche unfold.

Long, jagged cracks tore through the mountain's surface from top to bottom, each one letting out a deep, earth-shaking rumble. My eyes widened in horror.

"Oh no…" I whispered.

I yanked Kai into my arms, teeth gritted as I looked up—then the whole mountain *exploded*. It crumbled into massive chunks of ice and stone, and from the middle of the chaos, a Leviathan's neck erupted from within the mountain itself.

Boulders and snow blasted into the sky, raining down like the apocalypse.

Beneath us, the very ground we stood on broke free from the mountain, transforming into a massive floating platform.

We were launched into the air, all of us scattering in different directions.

I finally landed hard on a snowy slope and immediately started sliding. Wind and snow whipped across my face, blinding me with cold and panic.

I held Kai tight, cradling him in my arm as I skidded downhill at full speed. I slammed through branches, dodged rocks, zig-zagging left and right like a human pinball.

Then—bam—I smashed through a boulder near a cliff's edge and flew off the ledge with Kai still in my grasp.

Below?

A pit of razor-sharp icicles waiting to turn us into frozen kabobs.

I summoned celestial chains, hurling them at the cliffside. They latched

on just in time, jerking us to a stop midair.

Dangling there, I clutched Kai tighter as he chirped in fear and buried his head into my chest.

"You'll be alright," I muttered, sweat trickling down my face.

I glanced up at the glowing purple chains, holding onto hope like my life depended on it—because it did.

"We'll be okay… *WE'LL BE OKAY!*" I kept repeating in my head.

But then I saw it.

The Leviathan—the very same one that leveled the mountain—was staring down at me. Golden eyes. Snarl on its face. Its mouth opened in a roar that shattered the air, spit flying, pink tongue flailing like a monstrous whip.

How is it alive?!

I thought Demaurion killed this thing! Was it too strong? Did it fake its death? Leviathans *are* smart, after all…

Before I could even finish the thought—*WHAM!*

One of its massive tentacles slapped my chains. They snapped like twine.

"NO!" I screamed, plummeting toward the icicle pit of doom, Kai still in my arms.

This was it.

Tail glowing purple, I shut my eyes tight.

"I'm scared! I'm scared! I'm scared! I'm too young to die! I'm AFRAID TO DIE!"

I screamed in my mind.

But then—

I felt something.

Someone.

A sudden force yanked us back, hurling us to safety in a flash of light.

And then… nothing.

I blinked. Kai was still in my arms. I was standing—barely—on a sheet of glistening, slippery ice.

"What the—who did that?!" I gasped, whipping my head around in pure confusion.

Footsteps.

Crunching on the ice.

I turned—and there, stepping out from behind a block of jagged ice, was a figure.

Just a silhouette at first… but his eyes?

They were glowing green.

And in a voice low enough to send chills deeper than the cold, he whispered—

"Hello…"

CH.14 Attack of the Leviathan, Round 2

I stared in shock as the figure stepped out of the shadows.

It was Eli.

You know, *that* Eli — the kid who uses the Time Element, has Wyvern features, and never says a single word unless he's screaming an attack name like he's in a video game boss fight. He's 12, wears a gray jacket and blue jeans, has mixed skin and black hair swept sideways, almost covering his left eye but not quite. His dark green Wyvern wings folded behind him, and his black tail dragged along the snowy ground. Crackles of green temporal energy sparked around him as he turned toward the massive, shiny blue Leviathan looming ahead.

"Eli? What are you doing here?" I asked, completely thrown. "Did you come to find us or something?"

Silence. Obviously.

Probably using his ability to peek into the past and future — but only three times a day, which is both OP and inconvenient.

Then, without a word, he pulled out his weapon: a sleek, metallic dual-bladed sword. Blue with glowing green veins of energy running through it. Sharp as drama at a middle school dance.

I turned back toward the Leviathan's glowing golden eyes. "Alright, let's wrap this up. I got places to be."

I glanced down at Kai. "I don't know where you should go, little dude. Everyone's gone. Just… stay here and *promise* me you won't do anything dumb."

Kai bounced in excitement like this was a field trip.

I pulled out my daggers, crackling with celestial energy. Eli pointed his sword straight at the beast, face like stone. No fear. Just quiet fury.

We launched ourselves into the air, energy trailing behind us. Together, we slashed at the Leviathan's ear as we zipped by. I landed on its back, sliding along the icy scales before stabbing my dagger deep into its flesh.

I charged forward, dragging the blade across its back, leaving a trail of glowing blood. It jerked, throwing me off — but I whipped out my celestial chains mid-air, latching onto its ear.

I reeled myself in, launched forward, and kicked it in the face so hard a shockwave exploded on impact.

But the Leviathan was pissed now. It turned sharply and SMACKED me with its head like I owed it money. I crashed through the blizzard, cold biting every inch of me. Using the chains again, I hooked onto a tree and slingshotted myself back into the fight.

Tree to tree I went, energy building with each leap, until I soared through the air and shouted, **"GALACTICAL UPPERCUT!"**

BOOM.

My fist met its jaw and an explosion of light and force cracked the sky. The Leviathan roared in agony.

It lashed out with a tentacle — I barely dodged. Then another. I zipped right past it. The third one came, and I spun like a Beyblade, slicing it clean with my dagger.

I raised one blade to the sky, yelling, "TAKE THIS, YOU OVERGROWN UNDERWATER LIZARD WHO HAS NO BI—"

WHACK.

A tentacle sent me flying into the snow like a ragdoll. I crashed hard, snow blasting in every direction.

I gritted my teeth and climbed the broken slope back toward the monster.

"So, what, are we just gonna keep fighting this thing 'til one of us gives up?" I muttered.

Suddenly, Eli teleported beside the Leviathan's face and hit it with a *hurricane kick*, then dashed again, *aerial kicked* its jaw, then vanished again. Dude was everywhere and nowhere at once.

But Leviathan got lucky. One of its tentacles smacked him mid-air and sent him crashing through several trees like a human bowling ball.

Eli reappeared beside me, quiet as always. I glanced over.

"Can't you just, like, hit it with a mega move already?"

He nodded.

Then… it started.

Timeless energy crackled around him as he smirked. He tapped his foot once. Again. Again. Each stomp sent green sparks flying, growing brighter and brighter.

"**Chrono's Ultimate: TIMELESS DESTRUCTION!**"

On the final stomp, *everything went dark* — like someone just deleted the sun. Pitch black.

His eyes lit up a blinding green as he began teleporting at hyper speed toward the Leviathan. His form blurred into a spinning green vortex, time itself unraveling around him.

He roared, "**CHRONOTROPIC SHATTER!**"

He ripped through dimensions like paper, phasing through whole universes, jumping timelines, and then—

BOOM.

He reappeared right in front of the Leviathan's face, unleashing a punch that shattered the *air itself*. Time cracked. Matter disintegrated. Space didn't even *try* to hold together.

A green shockwave burst from Leviathan's skull, blasting across all of Eclitsic. Mountains crumbled. The ground split. The world trembled.

Silence.

Eli dropped to the ground, arms crossed, unfazed.

Me? I was standing there like .

"WHAT WAS THAT?!" I screamed, totally fanboying.

The Leviathan let out a final groan and crashed back into the water, ice and snow exploding in its wake. The earth cracked beneath it as it sank out of sight.

I turned to Eli, who still hadn't said a word.

Bro.

When is this guy ever gonna talk?

I walked over and gave him a high five. "Nice job. Now, let's go grab Kai and find our friends. Oh, and by the way — teach me that move. That was NUTS."

We walked off, mostly me rambling, knowing full well he wouldn't reply.

I picked up Kai, who chirped in excitement.

But then I paused.

I looked at Eli's sword… at his wings… at the green glow radiating from them.

And I couldn't help but wonder… "**What tribe does this guy *really* belong to?**" "Eli, is there something you need to tell me?" I asked, arching an eyebrow.

Without a word, he pulled out a piece of paper and scribbled something quickly, then flipped it over for me to read. The note said, *Yes, I do have something to tell you.*

Curiosity hit me like a freight train. "What is it?"

He wrote furiously, the words appearing in a blur:

I was supposed to be part of the Chosen Ones in the prophecy. My role was 'Celestial's Fight'—which used to be called 'Time's Fight'.

My eyes went wide, and my jaw dropped like it hit the floor. "Wait, what?! How were you—this doesn't make any sense! Since when?!"

Eli's pen scratched again:

Back when Vigilzante was writing the prophecy before he died, the rarest and most powerful Element was Lunar. He assumed only Lunaranites would wield it, so he skipped that Element entirely. Then came the forgotten, lost tribe of Avangard—the Zeriath.

Zeriath was once connected to Avangard but drifted away as the earth aged, becoming a distant continent. Its people, the Nomanites, were born without any Element, mostly bearing Wyvern traits—some had none at all.

I was the only exception. Born with the Time Element somehow. I can rewind time, travel to past and future, move at insane speeds, and manipulate time energy—either for destruction or altering the flow of things.

Vigilzante wanted me in the prophecy to lead the other Elements. But

Avangard's Founding Fathers disagreed. Mark the Celestianite said the Time Element was cheating and didn't fit as the fifth Element.

Plus, I belonged to a forbidden tribe—no one from Zeriath was allowed in other parts of Avangard. Violation meant death. So, over time, Vigilzante removed me from the prophecy.

Then, when a Crystallized Celestianite with the Celestial Element appeared, Vigilzante replaced me. That was in 2013—the year you were born—the first real Celestial user known to man.

After the war in 2013, Vigilzante died fighting Dreadixz. Wars kept erupting. The Lost Key? That was way before all this.

•

I dropped my gaze, the weight of guilt and sorrow pressing down. Just as I was about to speak, Eli cut in, flashing me another note:

I know you're sorry. It's not your fault. I'm not mad. I'm just glad to be a normal person, like everyone else.

I smiled softly. "Well, you could've been the hero of it all, but… I guess this works."

We laughed as we trudged deeper into the snow, waiting for whatever was next.

Suddenly, wingbeats thundered above—hundreds of them. I looked up at the gray sky. "Eli, do you hear that?"

He squinted skyward.

My eyes grew wide. "WE GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE!"

We sprinted across the ice, hearts pounding. War cries pierced the air, a Lunaranite shouting, *"THERE THEY ARE! GET 'EM!"* The wingbeats closed in fast.

Ahead, a massive ice block stood. "COME ON!" I grabbed Eli's arm and slid to the side, pushing forward.

We dashed past jagged ice towers shaped like spiked pillars. I slipped dramatically, and we skidded across the ice on our backs, landing behind the ice block.

Silence. Thank god Eli was a pro at staying quiet.

Talons cracked sharply nearby as Lunaranites landed, snarling and snarling at each other.

Then King Dreadixz's deep voice cut through the wind:

"SOLDIERS! Find those little runts… Incarceration and I will handle this talk."

"YES, SIR!" the soldiers shouted, taking flight in every direction. They didn't see us.

Dreadixz's rage boiled as he yelled at Incarceration:

"So you unleashed the ILLEGALS?!"

Unfazed, Incarceration replied, "Yes. Remember what I said when we met?"

Dreadixz snarled, "They're forbidden in Foreshade!"

"They aren't forbidden everywhere," Incarceration countered coolly.

Dreadixz stammered, then relented: "Whatever. Keep them under control. They're notoriously disloyal."

He soared into the sky. Incarceration lingered, then coldly said:

"I know you're here. I can sense your presence, Underview…"

SHOOT.

Underview. One look, and your body turns to solid coal. No wonder the Nightmare Element is insane.

Incarceration paced around the ice block but didn't check our hiding spot.

"I'll wait for you chickens to come out. Or shall I make you?"

I swallowed hard, praying he wouldn't find us.

A dark chuckle. "I like you guys—the ones who try to survive instead of doing dumb shit. Look, I know you can't resist… just one peek, Don. One peek."

I said nothing but sweat poured down my face.

"Oh well, I could just keep your friends trapped in a tiny dark globe forever," Incarceration threatened.

At first, I thought it was a bluff—until cries rang out:

"DON! GET US OUT!"

"SAVE US!"

"WE HAVE ALL NINE POWER GEMS! HELP US TAKE HIM DOWN!"

Jocabed's voice pierced through.

Incarceration whispered close, despite not seeing me:

"Come on, I know you want to…"

I kept silent, hoping he'd quit. But what if my friends were really trapped? It made sense—we'd been separated since the mountain split.

A Power Gem bounced off my head and landed nearby. It was green, glowing—the Regeneration Gem, crafted by Regeneration the Zenith.

Eli and I stayed silent until Incarceration hissed:

"Three seconds to come out… or your friends go bye-bye."

I locked eyes with Eli. Could this be a trap? What if he killed us the moment we stepped out? We had no choice but to run—but I couldn't abandon my friends.

"3…" Their voices begged through the barrier.

"2…" Screams filled the air.

"1…" "PLEASE DON'T HURT THEM!" I pleaded, teleporting out of the block.

"DON!" they all shouted, as coal began to crawl over my body. Movement slipped away—my mind the only thing I controlled.

Incarceration smashed the globe; my friends burst free. Prince, Ella, Kai sprinted to me.

Incarceration floated up, triumphant:

"Playtime's over, kids. Don't worry, daddy will be back soon."

With a snap, he vanished, leaving me frozen, surrounded by my friends.

Oh, the stars…

CH.15 Escape from Eclitsic

It was a freezing, blistering night as we pushed up the mountain through an ice storm. Icicles rained from the sky like daggers, snapping and shattering on impact. The sky loomed dark and stormy, thick with gray clouds.

I was draped over Olsen's back, my body still encased in a shell of blackened coal. Jocabed led the way, hauling three bags—red, blue, and pink—each one packed with Power Gems. Ella carried Kai close to her chest.

The storm pelted us with ice so fast it seemed to fall at the speed of light. Every step up the steep, snowy slope was a battle. The cold was too intense for Angel to open a portal to the summit.

The ice cracked as it hit my coal-hardened skin, turning to water and slipping away. Thunder rolled across the sky, followed by bursts of lightning that stabbed the earth. Somehow, no one was hurt—yet.

"Hurry! We just need to reach the cave at the top—then we're at Mechamio for good!" Jocabed's voice cut through the storm.

Olsen turned to Archie, who was limping beside him. "You alright? Can you fly?"

Archie shook his head. "Still busted. Lightning took it out last time." He gestured to the white bandage wrapped around his singed wing—damage from our last run-in with the Lunaranites.

Jocabed looked back. "Everyone okay? Do we have everything?!"

"The storm's getting worse—I can feel it," she warned.

She wasn't wrong. The wind picked up, clouds racing, lightning bursting

wildly across the sky.

"Is Don gonna be alright?" Ella asked, worry clear in her voice.

"He'll be fine," Jocabed replied. "The ice should crack the coal shell and free him."

We pressed forward through the blinding snow and bitter wind until we reached a shallow cave in the mountainside. Jagged barbs jutted from the walls, and a large circular stone blocked the far end.

Olsen set me down. Emely stepped forward, conjuring icicles and slamming them into my coal-covered body. Blow after blow—until the coal cracked.

Finally, I burst free, stretching out my arms. "About time! Thought I'd be coal forever."

Emely laughed. "You had to make an entrance. The prophecy waits for no one."

"No time for speeches!" Sophia snapped. "Get that rock out of the way—we move now."

"Got it!" I nodded.

But just as we turned to leave, I heard the sound of wings slicing through the storm. I looked up.

An army of Lunaranites soared through the sky.

I froze, then whipped around. "STELLAR'S BUNS! WE GOTTA MOVE—NOW!"

A massive Lunaranite spotted us and dove with a roar.

"SHOOT!" Archie yelled. "OLSEN, MOVE!"

More followed, firing shadow beams down from the sky. One hit the mountaintop, rocking the earth. Ice and stone shattered and flew in all directions.

"OLSEN, FASTER!" Javier shouted.

"I'M TRYING!" Olsen grunted, straining against the boulder.

A beam blasted the cave, hurling everyone back. Prince slammed into the wall with a loud *THUMP* and crumpled to the ground.

The Lunaranites closed in.

"I'LL TAKE THEM ON!" Archie roared, eyes blazing with red and

orange flames.

"No—ARCHIE, WAIT!" I shouted, but he was already gone, a fiery trail streaking behind him.

He slammed into Dreadixz, gripping the creature's horns, trying to steer it. But Dreadixz roared, caught Archie in his jaws, and hurled him from the mountain.

"ARCHIE!!!" I screamed, racing to the edge.

Then, like a bolt to my skull—Incarceration's voice pierced my mind.

JOIN ME.

I snapped my head to the side, resisting the call. Celestial energy flared in my arms. I glared at Dreadixz, fury burning through my chest.

"COME AT ME, DREADIXZ!" I bellowed, louder than the storm.

I launched into the sky, fists glowing with celestial power. I slammed into Dreadixz with a punch so hard it echoed across the peaks.

The shockwave threw me back into the cave. I crashed beside Olsen and the rock—just in time.

Dreadixz shrieked in pain, a purple burn glowing along his jaw.

Before he could recover, Archie came out of nowhere—engulfed in flame.

"TAKE THIS, YOU PIECE OF MONSTROSITY!" he roared, punching Dreadixz square in the cheek.

The blast sent the beast spiraling through the storm like a flaming comet. His fall scattered the remaining Lunaranites like leaves in a whirlwind.

The explosion's shockwave cracked the boulder clean in half.

"Why didn't I think of that?" Olsen muttered.

Behind the broken stone—an exit. Mechamio awaited.

Blue skies. Calm winds. Peace.

"MOVE!" Demaurion shouted.

We rushed through the opening—and dropped.

"AHHHHHHHHHHH!"

Wind roared past our ears as we plummeted. We crashed onto cold metal just as the gates slammed shut above us.

FIVE HOURS LATER

I stirred, blinking at my surroundings.

We made it.

The sounds of ticking gears and shifting machinery filled the air. That old metallic scent was everywhere. We were in Mechamio—a sprawling mechanical metropolis of chrome and copper.

The sky above was blue, but everything else was gears, pipes, and pistons. Towering clock towers loomed above rusty buildings. Some gleamed silver. Others groaned with rust.

I realized I was standing on top of everyone else—still knocked out from the fall. I jumped off, landing on a metal bridge.

"So… time to fight the next beast," I muttered, adjusting my gloves.

But something bothered me. According to the Lunaranite legends, only *one* could evolve into a Crystallized Lunaranite Dragon.

That one was him.

But why me? Why target *me* in the last battle?

And Incarceration… why did he whisper for me to kill my friends?

Back in Eclitsic, I didn't just think about it—it felt like I *wanted* to. Not an intrusive thought. Something deeper. Something darker.

What if it was all a trick? What if those memories and nightmares weren't real?

A soft hand landed on my shoulder. I turned. Power.

"Finally woke up?" he said.

I smiled. "Guess so. Everyone alright?"

"Yeah. You and Archie against Dreadixz? That was insane," Angel said, brushing off his hero suit.

"We're just that good," I shrugged. "Now we find the next beast, then it's on to the Grolian Forest. Then Rufty Mountains. Then Celestia. Then Foreshade."

Javier's back spikes flared. "Let's do this!"

Everyone began waking up and we crossed a long, silver bridge into the city.

Air hissed. Metal clanged. Mechamio never slept.

As we walked, a large, rusty sign caught my eye.

AVANGARD BATTLES CHAMPIONSHIP: CELESTIANITES VS MECHANITES!

STARTS 9:00 AM – ENDS 5:30 PM

I paused. Could the next beast be hiding in that arena?

"Hey, guys!" I called. "What if we enter the Avangard Battles? Maybe our next beast is in there!"

Prince zipped over, unimpressed. "Pointless."

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN, 'NO POINT'?!" I snapped.

"Obvious. Celestianites are stomping the Mechanites."

I scowled. "We're not here to *watch*—we're here to *fight*, you feather-brained idiot!"

Olsen chimed in. "Well, if we're watching, we should grab some of that *'bada bap ba baa'... I'm lovin' it*."

"Olsen, stop. You already had rocks for breakfast," Archie muttered.

Suddenly, the bridge shook violently.

"What was that?!" I shouted, grabbing the rails.

The rumble grew louder. Then it appeared.

A colossal titan made entirely of stone. Covered in moss, horns of jagged rock, blocky limbs, glowing white eyes, and a spiked stone tail.

It stomped forward. The bridge groaned, then buckled.

"HOLD ON!" I screamed.

The titan roared again—and stomped.

The bridge cracked.

SNAP!

I lost my grip and fell.

"DON!" my crew shouted.

We all plummeted. The citizens below gasped.

But I wasn't done.

I fired celestial chains from my hands, snagging the edge of the snapped bridge. The crowd erupted in cheers—but the question still loomed.

How do we get down?

The titan peered over the edge, triumphant.

"**ME KAYSON!!!**" it bellowed.

CH.16 Mind Games

Dreadixz roared in fury, his massive frame colliding again and again with the enormous boulder that sealed the cave's exit. Each impact echoed like thunder, but the stone didn't budge.

"You're wasting your strength," Incarceration said, his voice cold and unhurried as his claw scraped along the cave walls, the sound like nails across bone. "All you're doing is feeding your own frustration."

Outside, the violent ice storm had begun to fade. The howl of wind lessened, and visibility opened just enough for a few battered Lunaranite soldiers to navigate their way back into the cave. They flanked Dreadixz and Incarceration, bruised and bloodied but obedient.

Dreadixz backed away from the boulder, eyes burning with humiliation. He turned slowly, his talons clicking against the icy stone. "If you think it's easy, why don't you give it a try?" he growled.

Incarceration stopped scraping and looked at him with narrowed crimson eyes. He raised a hand, and a sphere of darkness formed between his thumb and index finger—pure, compact, and unstable.

With a breath, he sent it flying. The orb smashed into the boulder and detonated with a blast of void energy. The stone exploded into fragments, the shockwave pressing the cold cave air into a momentary silence.

Incarceration turned to Dreadixz with a slow, smug smile. "That's why they call me the mastermind."

Sunlight broke through the breach, casting golden rays across the cold floor. In the distance, the mechanical clangs and hydraulic hisses of Mechamio began to echo.

Dreadixz spread his wings with a frustrated sigh. "So, tell me the plan again."

"I'm not repeating myself," Incarceration snapped. "What matters is that Don's mind is cracking. The nightmare worked. Physically, he's a threat. But emotionally? He's crumbling."

He paced slowly, talons tapping with purpose. "Violence won't derail the prophecy. Emotion will. Fear. Doubt. Regret. Break his confidence and the prophecy unravels itself."

Dreadixz narrowed his eyes. "You think he'll just flip sides because of a few mind tricks?"

"He's unstable," Incarceration replied, "Powerful, yes—but unstable. Ever since he left Insane Middle School and trained with Power, he's been building strength with no emotional foundation. We don't need to beat him. We need to twist him. Then he joins us."

He smiled darkly. "And if he doesn't… I have other ways to break him."

At Mechamio

"KAYSON?! KAYSON?! DUDE, STOP WHATEVER YOU'RE DOING, KAYSON!" I yelled, my voice slicing through the chaos like a knife through butter. Around me, the crowd's screams and frantic shouts echoed everywhere—people running, panicking, eyes wide like saucers.

The ground trembled violently. The stone monster—Kayson's massive beast form—let out a deafening roar that shook the entire city of Mechamio to its core. Dust and rubble rattled from the shaking buildings. Its enormous claw-like fist started descending toward us, a crushing nightmare looming over the fragile bridge I was still hanging from, chains biting into my hands.

Okay, Don, think fast. My brain raced. *This dude's about to smash the bridge into oblivion. If it collapses, we're all toast.* Yeah, no pressure.

"WE GOTTA GET DOWN!" Prince shouted, clutching the rails with a death grip as the bridge shuddered beneath us. Then—bam!—it hit me: Angel's powers!

I hollered over the roar of destruction and the shrieks of terrified citizens, "Angel! Use your Portal Element! Get us down to safety, *now!*"

Angel gave me a quick, steady nod, his grip tightening one last time before he let go. The moment he dropped from the bridge's railing, his hands started weaving through the air, and suddenly a shimmering, swirling portal blinked open beneath him.

Below us, the city was a frantic mess—people sprinting in every direction, dodging debris and each other in sheer panic.

One by one, the rest of us let go and fell through Angel's portal, the wind whipping past as the bridge groaned and cracked behind us.

We landed hard but safe on the crowded ground of Mechamio, swallowed by a sea of panicked citizens—probably a million people, all staring upward, wide-eyed and frozen by fear.

I wiped the sweat off my forehead, letting out a shaky breath. "Oh thank God we survived…"

But just when I thought the nightmare was over, Kayson wasn't done.

You see, Kayson is a 12-year-old dude who's… well, let's say he's *built* like a tank—and not just because he loves to eat anything and everything. No, this guy *is* a Stone Mover, a beast with the Size Element that lets him grow and shrink at will. Dude's max size? About as big as the freaking Eiffel Tower.

I know Kayson from Insane Middle School—yeah, that chaotic hellhole. The dude's basically a walking mountain with a bottomless stomach. His stone monster form? Gigantic and scary as hell. And the way he eats? Brutal.

He bellowed another monstrous roar, shaking the eardrums of everyone in Mechamio. Some poor folks even started bleeding from their ears—no joke.

Without warning, Kayson ripped a huge, narrow chunk straight from the bridge. The sound of metal tearing filled the air—screeching, grinding, the kind of noise that makes your skin crawl. Then, he sank his massive teeth into the piece and started chomping like a beast savoring a rare delicacy.

He chomped. He munched. He *devoured* that chunk like it was the best meal he'd had in years.

And get this—I still don't get why Kayson is here in Mechamio. He's supposed to be chilling in the Rufty Mountains, the homeland of most Stone Movers. But nope, here he is, casually demolishing infrastructure like it's snack time.

"Mph! This is amazing! Can't wait until they rebuild this again in a few years!" Kayson said, his voice deep and thunderous, echoing across the chaos like a natural disaster.

People around us sighed in relief as the immediate panic faded and they went back to their business, ignoring the massive bridge-shaped snack in Kayson's mouth.

Then, as if flipping a switch, Kayson started shrinking—smaller and smaller—until he was about the size of a typical five-drawer nightstand.

Then—boom!—he jumped off the bridge from an insane height and landed with a ground-shaking thud that sent shockwaves rippling through the streets.

He trudged up to us, still chewing on the chunk of bridge like it was a hot dog, then shoved the remaining piece back into his mouth with a satisfied lick of his fingers.

"Artificially fantastic, I must say!" he said, grinning like a goof.

Now, here's a wild fact about Kayson: unlike the other Elementanites, he doesn't have normal skin. Nah, his entire body is pure stone—like a living statue carved from rock. Some folks might call him a golem, but he's not quite that simple. He *was born* a Stone Mover.

I crossed my arms, glaring at my stony friend. "Hey, Kayson, how was dinner?"

His huge grin only grew wider. "Oh, it was *nice*! Great to see you guys!"

"WE ALMOST DIED, YOU KNOW!" Demaurion exploded, launching a furious water ball at Kayson in pure frustration.

- **Kayson —** Stone Elemental Earthnite
- *Eats everything, literally. Strong, goofy, always focused on food or throwing*

hands.

just laughed it off, unfazed. "Hey, sorry! I was just trying to get the bridge."

Then he tilted his head, eyes sparkling with curiosity. "So, what are you guys doing here? Trying to catch the Avangard Battles?"

"Yeah, we're heading there," Olsen chimed in, "but only to find the next beast for Don to kill."

Kayson's eyes lit up like a kid in a candy store. "I'm going there too! Mind if I show you around Mechamio first?"

I shook my head firmly. "Nah, man. We're here to kill and go. No time for tours."

Sophia, with her usual sassy edge, cut in, "Let's just focus on getting to Gordiman's Bothole. Come on, idiots!"

Now, about King Gordiman—lemme just say it straight:

The dude's clueless.

Like, can't-find-his-own-crown clueless.

And yet? Somehow, he still **wears** a crown. Like a toddler who grabbed the grown-up's hat and refuses to take it off.

His so-called "army"? Yeah, they couldn't even hold a candle to the Blushinites. *Yes,* those Blushinites—the same folks from the Land of Hearts. The land where *fighting* isn't exactly a hobby. They're more about love and, well… feelings. Yet somehow, after a bit of training, they stomped the Mechanites. Which is wild, because Mechanites aren't exactly slackers; they're tinkerers, inventors, gear-heads, always fiddling with metal and steam-powered nonsense. So how did the "clueless" King Gordiman lose to a bunch of lovebirds with maybe two punches between them? Beats me.

The sun dipped low, painting the sky with this insane blood-orange fading into sapphire blue—like the world itself was hyped for what was about to go down. The city of Mechamio thrummed beneath our feet—the constant *clank* of gears turning, *hiss* of pistons pumping, steam puffing out of brass vents like a tired dragon exhaling.

Robots marched by, every movement crisp and almost too perfect, like

they were mimicking humans but just a little *off*. Some humans lingered too, faces wary, eyes scanning for trouble. The whole place felt like a giant clockwork beast that never slept.

And then—bam—my mind went back to the worst question of all:

Should I kill my friends?

I know it's a messed-up question to even ask myself, but… should I really do it?

Incarceration's been storming through my mind like a hurricane—dragging up nightmares, twisting memories, forcing me to relive every awful moment like some broken record every time I close my eyes. Sometimes, I'm straight-up scared to sleep.

But damn, he's not wrong.

Some of them *did* laugh at me. Some mocked me, others never gave me a shred of respect. A bunch thought I was weak, or stupid. Yeah, he was right about all that.

But that was back then. Fifth grade.

Now? It's obvious—it was just their way of being weird, their messed-up way of trying to make friends.

But do I trust people like Anhia? Daysni? Heck, even Prince?

Maybe it wasn't just them. Maybe *everyone* was laughing.

Maybe *everyone* thought I was nothing—worthless.

Demaurion? Prince? Ryan? Sophia? Jocabed?

The list spins around in my head like a broken compass, pointing nowhere.

I'm running. Through memories, through pain, through every past tragedy that clutches my mind like a vice.

They *won't* let me go.

Every exit I try to find—every escape route I chase—it's like they vanish into thin air.

There's *no* escape.

It's still chasing me down, faster than I can run.

I'm sprinting through my own head like a maniac, heart pounding, screaming inside—

AHHHHHHHHH—

"Don? Are you alright?" Ella's voice sliced through the chaos.

I stopped dead, shaking my head to clear the fog.

"Yeah. Yeah, I'm—fine…"

Her eyes didn't buy it—not for a second—but she didn't push. She just kept walking.

I let out a slow breath, forcing myself forward.

I gotta keep telling myself—those laughs were just childish noise from fifth grade.

I'm twelve now. I can't be stuck holding onto grudges like some crybaby.

I need to man up. Keep moving.

"And we're here!" Kayson's voice snapped me back to the moment. We reached the arena—no, *the* arena. The Colosseum rose before us like a titan forged from steel and sweat. It was massive, more machine than stone, with ten rows of cold, unforgiving steel seats curving around a giant sandpit at the center—the battlefield.

King Gordiman sat high above, perched on a throne that looked like it was welded from gears and silver plates. Behind him, a complex machine of ticking cogs and spinning wheels hummed quietly. His robe wasn't fabric—it was mechanical, with shoulder plates that shifted and clanked softly as he moved. His cape was a cascade of steel mesh that caught the dying light and shimmered like liquid metal. Even his hair was crafted from flexible metal strands that glistened under the sky.

He stood up.

"WHO WANTS TO SEE THE CHOSEN ONES FIGHT?!" he bellowed, voice booming through the colosseum like a battle horn.

The stadium exploded in cheers.

Kayson's face went pale. "Wait… fight? We're fighting?!"

"Duh," Sophia rolled her eyes, folding her arms with that trademark sass. "Our beast might be here."

Gordiman raised his hand, silencing the crowd instantly.

"Let me introduce… our Crystallized Celestianite, Don—and his opponent… RYAN BUCKNER!"

The crowd went wild. Lost it.

"RYAN?!" I shouted before I could stop myself.

From beneath the sandpit, a massive metal dome shattered open with a *clang*, and a figure blasted upward like a rocket, landing with an earth-shattering boom that sent dust flying in every direction.

"RYAN! RYAN! RYAN!" the crowd chanted like it was a rock concert.

Ryan. Twelve years old. Gamer. Influencer. Obnoxiously cocky. The kind of kid who's always one step away from livestreaming his own ego.

He was decked out in mechanical armor layered with spinning gears that shifted constantly, arms transformed into giant drills, legs fitted with booster jets ready to launch. Dude looked like a walking Swiss Army knife designed for mayhem.

"COME AND GET IT, DON!" he roared, voice dripping with cocky bravado.

Celestial energy sparked and danced along my arms and flared behind my eyes like a cosmic wildfire. My fists clenched tight, a familiar heat rising in my chest.

The crowd fell silent, the tension thick enough to cut with a knife.

Energy pulsed through the rings embedded in my wrists—alive, buzzing with power.

"Let the battles begin…" I whispered, stepping forward into the storm.

CH.17 The Arena Battles

The trumpets blared, echoing through the skies — the signal had been given. The battle had begun.

Without hesitation, I lunged forward, celestial energy crackling wildly around me like lightning in a bottle about to burst. I charged straight at Ryan, unleashing my deadliest combo.

I hit him with the **Spin Drop**, slamming him backward — then, before he even had a second to breathe, I teleported behind him and landed the **50-50-50 Celestial Dropkick**. His body jerked forward through the air, but I was already there — I teleported again, this time right in front of him, and hit him with a **Galactical Uppercut** that shot him upward like a firework.

Still mid-air, I appeared *above* him. "Not done yet," I muttered, slamming down with a **Celestial Bash** that spiked him to the ground like a comet. **BOOM.** He crashed hard, the earth cracking beneath him. But then—his feet started morphing. Metal twisted and folded until his soles turned into wheels, and suddenly Ryan was *skating* toward me like a blur.

I dashed forward to meet him, throwing a heavy right hook—but he dodged, sliding past with finesse. I didn't let up. I lunged forward, swinging a celestial overhand punch. He moved again—so I teleported in front of him, grabbed his neck mid-motion, and **slammed** him into the ground.

Dust exploded everywhere. I hurled him across the field like a ragdoll, and he tumbled violently, scraping up dirt and chaos.

The crowd **roared**. I adjusted my gloves with a smirk.

"Nice one, Ryan," I called out. "But now… let me show you what I've *really* got in store."

I launched forward with a burst of speed that left a shockwave screaming behind me.

"**RAVAGE!**" I shouted.

I appeared directly in front of him and drove a single **celestial punch** into his gut — *deep*, devastating. The force hurled him into the sky, and I followed, pummeling him mid-air with a **relentless flurry of punches**, blow after blow keeping him airborne. And then—**BOOM**—one final punch launched him even higher, almost out of view.

Charging celestial energy deep in my core, I took flight, wings of dragonlight unfurling from my back. I shot up through the clouds, tracking him in the sky.

I **darted through him four times** in a blur, the wind howling. Then I roared:

"**GALAXIES OUTBURST!**"

With one brutal **celestial axe-kick**, I crashed into him from above. A blinding ring of celestial energy exploded outward, rocking the entire battlefield. Ryan plummeted, burning through the sky like a meteor. I wasn't far behind.

I soared through storming clouds that tried to hold me back—but I pushed through and caught up. One last **celestial punch** sent him rocketing into the dirt.

CRASH!!!

He hit the ground like a god falling from heaven, a massive plume of sand and smoke erupting from the impact.

"**Not done yet!**" I yelled, landing with a quake of my own.

I blurred forward again, teleporting so fast I left trails of glowing energy behind me. My movements zigzagged through space, designed to confuse. And it worked—I reappeared behind him mid-spin.

"**SAVAGE SWEEP!**" I called.

I swept him off his feet with one fluid motion, flipping him into the air. Before he could drop, I turned—both fists glowing, a tiny shimmering

celestial star swirling on my right fist.

I drove that punch into his stomach like it was divine judgment. The impact created a shockwave so massive it rippled across the field—and Ryan went soaring sky-high once again.

Then—**BOOM.**

He crashed back down, creating a **colossal celestial shockwave** that shook the entire battlefield—*even King Gordiman's throne trembled* from the force.

I cracked my knuckles with a smirk.

"Alright… *now* I'm done." As the dust and smoke slowly cleared, there he was — **Ryan**, laid out flat on the ground, tongue sticking out like a cartoon character KO'd in round one. The crowd **erupted**. Gasps turned into thunderous cheers as they realized: the unbeatable champion… had finally fallen.

King Gordiman's face looked like the color had been drained right out of it. His jaw was slack, his eyes wide, frozen somewhere between disbelief and awe.

"**There's no way!**" he shouted, voice bursting with excitement. "No one's ever beaten the champion!"

Then, to my surprise, he beamed. "You know what? You deserve a reward for that performance."

From behind his throne, he pulled out a gleaming object — a **silver dragon snout**, forged from thick metallic steel. It gleamed under the stadium lights, sharp edges giving it a sleek, deadly look, like it had been sliced down the middle… even though it hadn't. Four small holes lined the front of the snout, ending in a sharp, pointed tip.

I stepped forward and took it from his hands, inspecting it with a raised brow.

"So… what does this thing do?" I asked, rotating it in my hand, scanning every detail.

King Gordiman clapped me on the back, grinning. "Just slap it on your dragon hoodie!"

So I did — attaching it right onto the purple snout of my hoodie. The

metal clicked into place like it was made for it.

"That's a **Snoutzer**!" Gordiman said proudly. "It enhances your energy output during combat — amps everything up. Oh, and by the way…" His grin widened. "What were those moves?! They were *sick*!"

I smirked and put my hands on my hips. "Just part of my arsenal. Decided to beef it up a little. Y'know, since I'm strong enough, might as well have a bigger moveset. I'm a Celestial User, after all."

That's when I saw it — that mischievous gleam flash across his eyes.

"Well," he said slyly, "if you can take down *our* champion… how about you face our **biggest** champion?"

My ears twitched. "Biggest? I thought Ryan was the top dog."

"He *was*," Gordiman said with a smirk. "Only because we haven't released this one in *years*. He's been locked away for being too dangerous."

Then he pulled out a **golden trumpet** — and blew it.

The sound pierced the air, grabbing the attention of the crowd like a lightning strike.

"**RELEASE CYBER DON!!!**" he shouted.

I blinked. "**CYBER DON?!**" My voice cracked with confusion — and a bit of panic.

That's when I heard it — the *whoosh* of rocket jets overhead.

I looked up at the orange-tinted sky.

…and that's when I realized:

I fricked up.

A cybernetic figure soared above us, cutting through the clouds like a missile. He locked eyes with me — glowing red, unblinking — then **rocketed straight down**, hands wide open like claws ready to pounce.

"WOAH!" I shouted, diving out of the way just as he **SLAMMED** into the ground with a seismic *BOOM* that shook the entire arena.

I landed flat on my butt, eyes wide as I looked up.

Standing there in the crater was a towering robotic figure — **and he looked eerily like me.**

But this wasn't just a robot. It was a **war machine**.

No mouth — just a silver, emotionless mask. His glowing red eyes

burned into mine. His legs were sleek and cybernetic, the upper half slim and rounded, the lower half thicker and reinforced, ending in high-powered boots. In the center of his purple-plated chest was a wide, circular opening — some kind of energy core? Weapon?

His arms were metallic silver, slim but muscular, with razor-sharp claws at the ends that looked like they could slice through mountains. His nose? Sharp and pointed — like a dagger welded to his face. His head? Brown. My shade of brown. And the haircut? Exactly like mine… just robotic.

This dude was a **copy.** A bootleg. A knockoff of *me*.

And I wasn't flattered.

I stood up, brushing off my suit. My jaw tightened. My hoodie came up, casting my face in shadow. I adjusted my gloves and sharpened them into **draconic claws**. The rings around my wrists flared up, glowing with a soft, ominous **celestial purple**.

I stepped forward, staring him down. Now we were face-to-face — man vs. machine.

"So this is how it's gonna go, huh?" I said, locking eyes with him.

No response. Just a cold, calculating stare.

The crowd **exploded**, cheering like we were about to duel at high noon. Tension crackled in the air. My fists clenched. My stance shifted.

My glare narrowed.

"**Come at me…**"

The trumpets sounded, and the fight exploded into motion.

We clashed—claws grinding against claws. I backhanded him across the face, followed by a sharp right hook, a quick left, and then I spun into a roundhouse kick. I dropped down low, executing a Spin Drop that launched him backward. But before I could take a breath, he activated his rocket boosters and surged toward me.

We collided again, fists flying in a chaotic flurry. He threw a rapid-fire barrage of punches and kicks, but I dodged to the left, then the right, narrowly avoiding two strikes. I lunged forward, twisted mid-air, and threw a Celestial Punch at his face—he blocked it with his forearm. He went for a slap, but I blocked it too, the force of it rippling the air between

us.

I landed a few quick jabs to his face, then shouted, "INSANE WRECK!" My aerial Celestial Kick rocketed him into the air. He stopped mid-flight, jet boosters roaring, then dove down and skid across the battlefield. As he landed, five missiles shot from his claws, aimed straight at me.

My ears twitched—Celestianite senses kicking in.

I bolted.

Missile one: dodged to the left, muttering, "Miss me with that gay shit."

Missile two: ducked low.

Missile three: dove right.

Missile four: leapt over it.

Missile five: caught it mid-flip and hurled it right back at him. Boom.

But I wasn't done.

I ran circles around him, arms behind my back, increasing speed as trails of Celestial energy sparked behind me. A Celestial tornado formed, trapping him. My afterimages appeared like clones—fake, but enough to confuse him. I teleported in front of him, sidestepped, and whispered:

"Kill Galaxy Day."

I spun into a Celestial vortex and flash-kicked his chin, sending shockwaves through the air as he ascended. I teleported above, flipped, then dropkicked him down toward the ground. As he fell, I followed—grabbed his head, charged both fists, and roared:

"INFUSED HEIGHTS!"

The impact of my strike sent shockwaves rippling through the air. He crashed into the earth with a thunderous *THUD*, but he wasn't finished. He popped up, eyes locked on me.

In a blur, he jet-blitzed me from all directions, each hit faster than the last. Then, BOOM—an explosion bigger than anything Archie ever made knocked me flying. I skidded across the dirt, tasting sand. He appeared behind me and launched another blast into my back, hurling me skyward.

I crashed like a meteor.

I got up slowly, fists up, eyes scanning. He teleported—SLAP. Backhand. Uppercut. Claw slash to my chest. He grabbed my leg and slammed me,

dragging me like a ragdoll across the dirt.

He launched me upward again—flash kicked me mid-air. Then came five more missiles, spiraling toward me and converging. The explosion engulfed everything. I fell, body heating up like a star. When I hit the ground—BOOM! A crater formed.

But I wasn't out.

I crawled from the impact crater, lungs screaming, stars swirling behind my eyes. Dust floated through the air like ancient ash. The entire crowd? Dead silent. You could hear a pin drop from another timeline.

Cyber Don stood tall, steam pouring off him like he was fresh off the assembly line. Every hit I threw felt like trying to dent a black hole with a spoon.

I staggered to my feet, every muscle thrumming—and then it hit.

Not pain.

Something *else.*

Like a static earthquake in my bloodstream.

The Celestial energy inside me didn't just rise. It *twitched*. It *glitched*. It *morphed.*

"…what the—" I looked down. My hands were glowing. No, *radiating.* Violet light pulsed under my skin like it was trying to speak in Morse code.

My heartbeat slowed.

Time… got weird.

Then—I heard it. My voice, but upgraded. Filtered through galaxies. Calm. Focused. Wicked smart.

"It's time you stopped limiting your potential."

The letters **KX** flashed in my vision—bright, coded, *inevitable.*

A rush of clarity drowned me.

I breathed in—

—and became *KX Don.*

CRACK!! My aura split open like a blackhole cracked the sky. Gravity got confused. My jacket flared like it was made of nova fire. My eyes?

Literal constellations. Moving. Alive.

Cyber Don took a step forward, sounding like a busted speaker.

"System scan—abnormality detected—"

I cut him off with a smirk. "What's abnormal is that you thought you were built for this level of smoke."

Step.

The ground split.

Another step.

Air *rippled*.

"See, imitation's cute. But I'm not here to reflect. I'm here to *redefine."*

I cracked my neck—once.

"I don't follow programming. I *write the language."*

FLASH—I was gone.

Reappeared right in his grill.

"You simulate power. I simulate reality."

I hit him once in the gut—*BOOM!* Bent him like a paperclip in a microwave.

"I've been knocked down. Burned. Broken. But I rebuilt myself *manually.* You? You're a pop-up ad with a superiority complex."

BZRAHHH!!! Celestial wings erupted—part data, part destiny.

"ELEMENTAL FORM: 100% SYNC."

Cosmic arcs ran wild down my arms. Silver lightning tangled with purple flame. I blurred—like I lagged out of existence and popped back in angrier.

"THE CHOSEN ONE'S STRIKE!"

Fist. Face. Fusion-level impact.

He flew.

I clapped—*FLASH*—time paused. Froze like a buffering stream.

Then—boom—I was behind him before physics even knew I moved.
Elbow. Heel kick. Uppercut.

"MILD GALACTICA."

He went *skyward.*
I followed.
"You've got processor power. But I've got *purpose."*

"365 DAYS!!"

Ten fists of violet storm came down like judgment day.
The world blinked.
The Colosseum? Screamed.
He glitched downward, sparks flying.
But I wasn't *done*.

"INITIATING: VIOLET PROTOCOL."

I spun through the sky like a comet on vengeance mode.

"VIOLET..."

Crack—a lightning coil wrapped my leg.

"...VIOLENCE!!"

Dropkick from heaven.
Cyber Don slammed into the dirt like he owed gravity money.
I landed, no words—just **energy.**
King Gordiman raised his hand—
"Don't," I said flatly.
Power stepped in, sensing something… off.

I clapped again. Shadows rolled in like spilled ink. Only my glowing eyes were visible now.

"Let's make things multiversal."
"360 DAYS OF UNLIMITED UNIVERSES!!"

One punch.
Just one.
The air cracked. Planets blinked into existence. I was flying through galaxies, laughing through wormholes, tossing stars like dice.
And then—
BOOM.
I walked straight out of a collapsing nebula.
Back in the arena.
Cyber Don stood—barely.
I punched him once.
Uppercut of *unmaking.*

"RAHHHHH!!!"

He didn't fall.
He ceased.
Shockwaves rocked Mechamio. Cracked mountains in *other countries.*
The crowd? Stone silent.
Then—
CLAP.
One cheer.
Another.
The whole arena exploded in noise.

"HE'S UNREAL!!"
"WE JUST WITNESSED A NEW ERA!!"
"SOMEONE PUT HIM IN THE COSMIC HALL OF FAME!!"

King Gordiman marched over with a golden ribbon glowing like destiny incarnate.

"CHAMPION OF THE 2025 AVANGARD BATTLES — LENS DON!!"

He raised my arm.

My crew ran over. Prince dapped me up, Olsen nodded like he knew, Sophia was wide-eyed.

"You're a literal cheat code," Prince said.

"My guy activated godmode," Sophia grinned.

Power looked me dead in the face.

"That wasn't instinct," he said. "That was evolution."

And I just stood there, quiet, the energy crackling down.

My eyes dimmed.

My voice dropped.

"…what… just happened to me?"

The crowd still roared.

But me?

I stared at my hands, glowing faintly, twitching like they weren't *done.*

Because whatever just awoke inside me?

It didn't ask for permission.

It chose me.

And I'm not sure I understand *why*—

…yet.

CH.18 The Beginning of Scourge Don

Once upon a time, deep in the lush, dark green Grolian Forest, the night was alive with sleepy peace. Forestinites were tucked into the shadows, blending in with the undergrowth as they dozed. Fireflies drifted lazily, their glowing butts lighting up the dark like tiny lanterns. Snakes slid between the roots, silver under the moonlight.

Inside a small cave warmed by a flickering fire, everyone was fast asleep—well, everyone except me.

I was a crystallized Celestianite, thrashing like a feral beast and roaring my lungs out as nightmares crashed over me. My body wouldn't stay still. I was pacing, growling, slamming my head into the stone floor like some sort of unhinged maniac. Every time I closed my eyes, more humiliating memories flooded in—some so personal I could practically shrivel up and die. I scraped my claws against the walls, bellowing even louder, probably waking up half the Forestinites outside. I whipped around, tail lashing, and accidentally smacked something. Correction: *someone.*

Demaurion.

He snarled and lifted his blue, dragon-serpent head, rows of dagger teeth glinting as he hissed at me. Pale blue patterns pulsed across his scales as he glared, looking about one millisecond away from eating me alive. Then, with a final growl, he flopped back down and went to sleep like it was no big deal.

I froze, panting, then slumped onto the ground. Curling up with my wings wrapped tight around me, I tried—*tried*—to sleep. But the second I closed my eyes, boom: an image of Incarceration's monstrous form

slammed into my mind, plus another humiliating flashback that made me wanna scream.

So I did.

I let out another roar and staggered to the back of the cave, crashing into the wall. I just lay there, feeling hopeless.

A few hours later, morning finally rolled in. My eyes were stuck wide open, purple cracks spider-webbing beneath them. I shook my head, trying to wake up, but I was already beyond exhausted.

Birds chirped overhead. Little Hrics hopped through the grass. I shifted out of my dragon form and flopped onto the ground with my tongue hanging out.

Kai hopped over and settled onto my lap, chittering curiously. I forced a tired smile.

"I'm alright, Kai. Just lost a few hours of sleep… Doesn't bother me, though."

I glanced around and realized everyone else had already left the cave. With a sigh, I stood up and stepped outside.

The forest was a living painting—trees glowing with vibrant green, flowers bursting from every corner, vines curling up trunks. The sky was a deep blue, sunlight streaming down through the leaves.

Everyone was gathered around the campfire, sitting on logs and minding their own business.

You're probably wondering how we even got here. Long story short: one Celestianite gave us a portal device a while back. We used it, poof—here we were. We hadn't met any new creatures or tracked down the next beast, so we figured we'd just camp out.

Ryan was already filming everything. Olsen was stuffing his face with a rock meal next to Kayson. Ella was in her cat form, curled up on the grass. Prince flitted overhead as a Lightning Bird, hunting breakfast. Power was training, and Archie was sitting carefully, probably trying not to burn the whole forest down.

"Morning, guys," I mumbled, my voice quieter than a mouse.

Sophia was brushing her hair. She shot me a look.

"Oh, it could've been better *without* all the roaring, thank you very much."

Demaurion bolted upright, snarling, "EXACTLY! WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT, MAN? DID YOU LOSE YOUR SCALES OR SOMETHING?!"

"Guys, everyone calm down," Ella said gently. "He's just… dealing with some stuff."

Prince landed beside the fire, talons crunching the grass as he tore into the Hric he'd caught.

"Seriously, though," he said between bites, "what was all that racket?"

I waved my arms like a panicked octopus.

"I—I'm sorry, okay? Ella's right. Just… nightmares. That's all."

"YOU BETTER FIX YOUR NIGHTMARES OR YOU'LL DIE IN MY HANDS!" Demaurion barked, still in his Leviathan form.

My eye twitched. I shifted into my Celestianite Dragon shape, my tail flicking red as celestial energy crackled across my scales.

"Woah, man! You know you're playing with *fire*, right?!"

Demaurion grew talons and crept closer, glaring up at me even though he was way shorter.

"AND YOU'RE PLAYING WITH SOMETHING *WAY* MORE DANGEROUS THAN FIRE!"

"LET'S SEE ABOUT THAT, NEPTUNE!" I shot back, teeth bared.

We squared up, pure murder in our eyes.

Then Ella squished herself between us, exasperated.

"Please, don't fight. It was *one* night. You're supposed to be mature heroes, remember?!"

I snorted and crossed my arms. "Fine. We'll settle this like men."

I raised my claws.

"Rock, paper, scissors… SHOOT!"

I threw scissors. He threw paper—then *switched* to rock right as I won.

"HEY! THAT'S CHEATING!" I yelled.

Demaurion smirked like the little gremlin he was. "NUH-UH!"

"YES, YOU DID!"

"NO, I DIDN'T!"

Before we could strangle each other, Olsen's massive tail club came out

of nowhere and *WHACKED* Demaurion in the face so hard he collapsed.

"STOP ACTING LIKE CHILDREN," Olsen bellowed.

I blinked down at Demaurion, now unconscious.

"He'll wake up in a few minutes," Olsen said, grinning.

I shifted back into my human form, my tail finally losing its glow. Puffing out a wisp of smoke, I turned away with a huff.

"Hmph. At least *that's* over."

We all sat back down around the fire. Prince was still tearing into his breakfast, so I quickly made sure Kai didn't see him chowing down on his distant cousin.

Kai eyed the marshmallows instead, so I gave him one. He looked delighted.

Hours passed in the warm morning air. Demaurion eventually woke up, rubbing his head and apparently forgetting all about the argument.

Then Emely broke the silence.

"So… how about we get hero names?"

Power perked up. "That could be fun—and maybe they'll stick once the prophecy comes true."

Angel stood on his log, looking very proud of himself.

"Alright. I'll go first. I'll be called… *Trix."*

Silence. Absolute, cricket-admitting-he's-gay levels of silence.

Sophia tilted her head. "Trix? What does that even mean?"

Angel cleared his throat.

"Well, since my Portal abilities aren't really combat-focused, I figured I'd use them to trick people into going places they don't wanna be." "Say an opponent tried to fight me," Angel explained, gesturing dramatically. "All I'd have to do is teleport them into some horrifying environment, and bam—they're done."

Olsen smirked and announced he'd be called *Rockslide.* Prince went with *Voltron.* Ella chose *Dune,* Emely claimed *Froza,* and Jocabed picked *Blizz.* Demaurion, obviously, was *Levi.* Power stuck with *Power,* Sophia dubbed herself *Soundwave,* and Javier settled on *Operate.*

And me? Yeah… I hadn't even thought of a name yet.

As everyone chattered about their new aliases, I started scratching my head like a confused puppy.

"What should I be called?" I muttered to myself. "There's got to be something. A name worthy of Avangard's next Power."

I was still spiraling when Olsen's voice snapped me out of my brain fog.

"So, Don… what's your name?"

I froze, then felt it hit me like a lightning bolt. The perfect name.

"KX," I declared.

Everyone stared at me blankly, like I'd just sprouted a second head.

"What?" I protested, throwing my hands in the air. "I only picked it because whenever I use 100%—or even just 5%—of my Elemental Form, those two letters appear behind me! It just happened at the Avangard Battles, I don't know how!"

Power peered at me, then broke into a soft chuckle.

"Don, KX is a good name," he said, nodding. "Perfect, actually."

He settled back on his log, eyes thoughtful.

"Let me tell you all a story real quick before we wrap up the night," he continued.

"Back when Avangard was still being formed, the Grolian Forest was created. Each region had Celestianites assigned to guard it, and one of them was the legendary founding father—KX. His name stood for *Kai Xii.* It meant 'guardian,' or 'protector,' or even 'ruler of the universe.' Though honestly, KX wasn't really any of those things. He just lived quietly and minded his business."

Power's gaze drifted into the flames.

"When he died, he left one final wish: that a Celestial User might one day touch his grave. He'd never met one while he was alive. KX's element was… unusual. If someone touched his grave while bearing a certain power, that would become their hero name forever. But no one knew what the name meant, so they never tried."

Then he looked straight at me.

"But when you were born, Don, your parents took you to Kai's grave when you were only two years old. You touched it. That was it—sealed.

Now, whenever you transform, your celestial energy burns those letters—KX—right behind you. And if you ever push past 100%—like 120%—your pupils literally morph into the letters K and X. Some say it even makes you smarter, because KX was brilliant in his time."

"That's… pretty cool," Olsen rumbled, morphing into his beast form and sprawling on the grass.

I smiled shyly. "I know, it might sound a little whack, but… it feels right."

The sky slowly shifted from blue to a hazy pink and red as twilight crept in. Everyone relaxed, laughter echoing through the clearing.

Demaurion tried to prank Olsen by blasting him with a jet of water in his Leviathan form. Olsen barely reacted—just spun around and smacked Demaurion in the face with his tail club so hard that he was out cold for hours.

Prince flew off to hunt again while I played with Kai.

I pulled a marshmallow from the bag and lobbed it toward him. My aim was garbage—the marshmallow sailed way past Kai and rolled into the trees.

Kai immediately bolted after it, little claws clicking on the stones.

"Hey—wait up!" I called, hopping off the log to chase him.

By the time I caught up, the forest had gone pitch dark. The trees loomed overhead, their huge leaves dripping with moisture. The grass was wet too, even though it hadn't rained.

"Kai?" I called, scanning the ferns. Nothing. No little hopping gremlin anywhere.

I was starting to feel that creeping, prickly sense of something being wrong.

Then, out of nowhere, Kai reappeared, perched on my shoulder with the marshmallow stabbed triumphantly on his sharp little teeth.

"Whoa—nice job, buddy!" I said, relieved. "Didn't think I'd find you out here."

The crickets started chirping again. An owl hooted—probably Angel, being nosy.

Then came a rustle in the trees.

I tensed, wings flaring open. My ears twitched at the faint scuttling.

I turned my head, searching the branches. Something moved up there—then vanished.

A cold chill crawled down my spine.

Suddenly, I heard fast crawling. And the clicking of hooves.

Whatever it was, it was moving *way* too quickly. But the shadows hid it completely.

"Hello?" My voice came out embarrassingly shaky. "Is…anyone out there?"

My tail started to glow purple, warning ready.

"Whatever you are, this is NOT funny!"

Something snapped a stick in the dark.

I flinched and started backing away, heart in my throat.

"Yeah, no," I muttered, still retreating. "Let's not waste any more time here."

I turned on my heel, Kai clinging to my shoulder, and booked it back toward the camp. Then I heard something barreling toward me—and something else crawling around the trees overhead. A bear roared in the distance. Some eerie, ghostly moan floated through the air.

I was this close to just noping out of there when something sticky—and weirdly sweet—wrapped around me, yanking me off my feet.

"HEY! WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?!" I hollered, flailing like an angry moth caught in a web.

Whatever it was didn't answer. It just started dragging me across the forest floor.

I smashed through bushes, scraped past thorns, face-planted into leaves, and straight-up ate a couple branches on the way. Then it slammed me onto the ground, rolling me over and over until I finally skidded to a stop against a rock.

Groaning, I staggered up, brushing dirt and mystery sap off my clothes.

"WHO'S DOING THIS?!" I shouted into the trees.

"WE ARE!" came a chorus of voices in perfect, obnoxious sync.

Lonnie Mae dropped down from the branches, followed by Mason and Kwa'asja—who landed with a soft thud beside them.

Kwa'asja was an 11-year-old girl with Barrier powers and Protective Armadillo traits. She was the most normal and chill person you could meet. She wore a multicolored jacket over her shell, blue jeans, and her hair was styled in neat braids.

Then Daysni materialized out of thin air, her Ghost Horse hooves clicking on the grass. She was 12, loved to annoy me for sport, and always wore her black-on-black outfit with her hair up in two buns.

As if that wasn't enough, Anhia strolled out of a tree completely crusted in diamond. She was 11, with Diamond Horse traits and the kind of attitude that said "I'm gonna taunt you for the next six hours." Her sparkling blue jacket glinted in the moonlight as she stepped forward, diamond hooves gleaming.

Keyler was next—he crawled down a tree in full Spider Form, then shifted back into human shape mid-air and landed in a showy pose. Red jacket, blue jeans, smug grin.

And of course, because the universe hates me, Drake skidded in front of the group at the last second, flinging a mud ball directly into my face.

I stood there for a second. Then wiped the sludge away, exhaling a slow, exhausted groan.

- **Anhia** — Diamond Elemental Earthnite
- *Acts like Don's bully but Don isn't scared—just annoyed. Sharp personality, literally and figuratively.*
- **Daysni** — Ghost Elemental Forestinite
- *Loves to annoy Don, expert pest. Full of mischief, but there's some lowkey loyalty hiding under all that playfulness.*
- **Kwa'asja** — Barrier Elemental Earthnite
- *Calm eater, naps more than fights. Quiet wall in battle, literally — reliable, laid-back protector vibes.*
- **Lonnie Mae** — Plant Elemental Forestinite
- *Hyper, super sweet like the ultimate teacher's pet.*
- **Keyler** — Web Element Forestinite
- *Mischievous teaser, loves messing with people.*
- **Mason** — Dough Element Earthnite
- *Usually chill, quiet, with a lowkey sense of humor.*

They all pointed at me dramatically, like a SWAT team about to make an arrest.

"YOU'VE BEEN SERVED!" they declared in unison. "Okay, seriously—WHAT WAS THAT FOR?!" I snapped, arms flailing.

Lonnie Mae adjusted her glasses, pulled out a crumpled piece of paper, and cleared her throat. "You… you have violated the—uh—the number one rule of the forest," she announced. They all pointed at me again, eyebrows knitted in righteous fury.

"DON'T ENTER THE FOREST!"

My jaw ***dropped***.

"WE PUT UP A ***CAMPSITE***, AND YOU GUYS DID NOTHI—you know what? Never mind." I turned to leave, only to feel a tap on my shoulder.

I spun around—and screamed like a toddler when Daysni popped up

inches from my face in ghost form, cackling like a little gremlin. Sighing, I scooped Kai into my arms and started trudging back toward camp. As I finally stepped out of the so-called "Forest of Doom," everyone turned to stare at me.

"Guys," I announced flatly, "we've got company."

Ryan immediately lifted his camera, grinning behind the lens. "Alright! Make sure you guys leave a like and sub! I'll be back with another livestream that's gonna be crazier than this one, dude!"

Olsen squinted past me. "Who is it?" Right on cue, the forest crew leaped out of the trees, striking their most dramatic superhero poses.

"You guys are here too?!" Olsen blurted, looking genuinely baffled.

"That's not all of them!" a voice called from above.

A moment later, something swooped down and landed on the cave roof—Fedjina, the tallest of the crew. She had long braids, Falcon powers, and a personality that could best be described as "*sass incarnate*."

Sophia stared at her, rubbing her temples. "Please tell me that's it."

Of course, it wasn't it.

"RIGHT HERE KIDDOS!" another voice hollered.

A pterodactyl dived out of the sky, flapping its wings before transforming in midair. It was William—11 years old, Wind Elemental, ADHD-fueled chaos. He landed in a crouch, brown hair flopping over his forehead.

- **William** — Wind Elemental Forestinite
- *Full-on ADHD energy, can't sit still.*
- **Fedjina** — Falcon Elemental Forestinite
- *Quick thinking and sassy*

Ella practically bounced with excitement. "So you all came to join us? That's so sweet!"

Mason morphed his arms into dough and took a casual bite. "We're here

to help protect the Grolian Forest."

William straightened up, grinning. "And to help with the prophecy and stuff!"

Prince's wings crackled with electricity. "Well, since we're all here, why don't we just hang out?"

Everyone shouted "Yeah!" in perfect unison. I tried to smile, but my gut twisted. I turned to look back at the cave.

Then it hit me—like a lightning strike straight to my brain. Incarceration's voice, echoing, furious:

JOIN ME!!!!

"ACK!" I yelped, grabbing my head. I shook it off, turned back to the others, then back to the darkness inside the cave. "I'll… just be in there," I muttered. "You guys have fun."

I slipped inside and sank down against the cold stone wall. And there, alone with my thoughts, the questions came flooding back. Should I do it? It'd been gnawing at me for days. What did Incarceration want from me? To join him? For what? Was he trying to derail the prophecy? Was this just another sick mind game?

He wants me to kill them.

Kill my friends. The people I'd risk everything to protect. The ones I'd never, ever hurt.

The ones I loved.

"I don't understand!" I yelled in my head, slamming my forehead into the wall.

My friends… They'd always been there. Even when I messed up, even when I acted like an idiot, even when everything went sideways.

Those embarrassing, awful memories were in the past.

I was the one still dragging them around. They cared about me. They always had.

So why did Incarceration want me to betray that? My eyes burned, and I clenched my fists, pressing my forehead harder against the stone.

"Don…"

I heard a quiet voice behind me.

Slowly, I turned—and saw Ella standing there, watching me with worried eyes.

Just as quickly, I turned back to face the wall, pretending she wasn't there.

"Look," she said gently, "we need to talk."

"Talk about what?" I snapped, frustration bleeding into every word.

Ella walked over and sat down beside me, her gaze steady.

"We need to talk about *you.*" Her voice was soft but unflinching. "About what's been happening to you since we got to Eclitsic. You've been sleeping less every night—or not at all. You're quieter. More serious. But less like yourself." She paused, searching my face. "What happened to the Don who used to dance around after taking down a beast?"

And there it was—the question I'd been dreading.

What should I do?

You choose, readers. You choose.

A = Tell her everything.

B = Lie. Keep struggling alone.

And yeah, I already knew which one you'd pick. A.

I sighed. She'd probably freak out—but she deserved the truth.

Slowly, I took a deep breath. My chest felt like it might crack open.

"Something's… telling me to kill you guys," I whispered.

Ella tilted her head, calm but wary. "Intrusive thoughts?"

I shook my head.

"No. Not intrusive thoughts. It's… it's been *pestering* me. Every second."

My voice started to crack.

"I wasn't trying to think about it, Ella! It just keeps showing up—over and over—nightmares, memories, the worst moments of my life. Embarrassing ones, awful ones. All twisted together. And no matter what I do, I can't make it stop."

I squeezed my eyes shut.

"It's not my fault. I'm *trying,* over and over again, but it won't leave my head." My voice dropped to a ragged whisper. "Just—please. Don't look at me like I'm a monster."

I turned away, wrapping my wings around myself, ashamed.

"I didn't tell anyone because… because I didn't want you all to see me as the bad guy. But something's urging me to be one."

My fists trembled.

"Ella—I'm scared, okay? I don't want this prophecy. I don't want any of it. I'm not cut out for this!"

The words came out as a shout.

"If I'm going to keep having these nightmares—if I'm going to keep feeling like this—I'd rather just give up!"

I lurched to my feet, tail swirling with angry purple and blue.

"DON, WAIT!" Ella called after me.

But I didn't.

I burst out of the cave, heart slamming against my ribs, and ran straight into the dark, sinister forest.

Branches slapped my arms. The cold bit my skin. I didn't care.

I was done.

I stopped, panting.

Somewhere behind me, I heard roaring.

Closer.

Trees snapped and crashed to the ground.

I spun, celestial energy crackling around me, lighting up the darkness in pulsing waves.

"DON, WATCH OUT!" Javier's voice tore through the night.

I barely had time to register the warning before the trees exploded outward.

A massive, nightmarish creature burst into the clearing—a towering monster of living wood and snarling roots. Four thick legs. Gnarled bark for skin. A mane of thorny bushes running down its spine.

It charged.

I bolted straight toward it, fists clenched.

Before I could swing, it swiped me aside with a single colossal claw.

The impact sent me flying through the trees. My vision spun. My body hit the ground hard enough to rattle my bones.

Somewhere in the chaos, the monster crashed through the campsite.

I heard the campfire crack and hiss as a burning tree collapsed over it. Sparks flew into the night.

Screams echoed.

Sophia fired a sonic blast into the beast's back.

It roared and swung its tail, smashing her into a tree.

Prince dove from above, lightning pouring off his wings. The strikes tore at the monster's bark—but it moved too fast, dodging with terrifying ease.

Then it struck him mid-dive, hammering him into the earth so hard he didn't get up.

Olsen and Ryan charged together, weapons raised.

The creature swept them aside like toys.

Archie hurled a blast of fire, an eruption so bright it lit the whole clearing—

—But the monster didn't even flinch.

With a deafening roar, it unleashed a shockwave.

Everyone was thrown back.

Weapons clattered to the ground.

Blood stained the grass.

My friends—my *family*—lay in broken heaps.

Only one of us still stood.

Olsen.

He stumbled forward, clutching his hammer, every breath ragged. His body was bloodied, but his eyes were fierce.

He leaped, swinging with everything he had.

And the monster struck first.

Its claws plunged through his chest.

Olsen's scream ripped through the clearing.

Then, with a sickening snarl, the creature hurled him back—straight into the cave.

I watched, helpless, as the entrance collapsed under a rain of falling rock.

"OLSEN!!!" I screamed, reaching out.

Tears blurred my vision.

Celestial energy poured off me in furious waves. My tail glowed, raging blue.

The monster roared once more and thundered back into the dark.

And then—

The last thing I heard, Olsen's voice, small and broken, echoing from behind the rubble:

"Don…"

CH.19 The Realization

(***A few hours later***)

Power slowly pushed himself up from the ground, scanning the wreckage with wide eyes.

"Is anyone okay?!"

Prince groaned as he staggered to his feet, blood dripping from a gash on his arm. He shifted back into his base form and wiped his face.

"Yeah… we're alive." He glanced over at Power. "But seriously, couldn't you have just nuked that thing? Why didn't you use everything you had?"

Power looked down, guilt written all over his face.

"Because…I was too late." His voice was quiet. "Before the beast showed up, I was out in the forest looking for Don and Kai. It took me way too long to get here. And by the time I did—" He swallowed. "—it was already on top of me. I didn't even get a chance to fight back. It killed Olsen…and it took Don."

William clenched his fists, shaking with anger.

"Doesn't matter now," he said through gritted teeth. "We'll get Olsen back on his feet, and then we're going after Don before that thing does anything worse."

"But we still need to reach the Rufty Mountains," Lonnie Mae reminded everyone. "If Don doesn't defeat the last beast, the prophecy falls apart."

"Great," Ella muttered, staring down at the ground stained with blood. "And how exactly are we supposed to stop that monster without Don?"

She lifted her head, her eyes tired but steady.

"Look…it's not Don's fault. Something is controlling him. It's making

him do things he'd never do on his own."

Everyone turned to her, confusion and dread etched into their faces.

"It's Incarceration," Ella said. "Even if none of us have seen him, Don has. Over and over." She looked at Demaurion. "You remember last night—how Don was thrashing around like something was inside his head?"

Demaurion nodded silently.

Ella's hands curled into fists.

"That was Incarceration. He's been invading Don's mind. And now I get it—he's trying to break him."

While she spoke, Drake clawed away chunks of rubble, and Lonnie crawled in to reach Olsen's leg. She pressed her hand to his skin, and vines unfurled from her back, sliding into his wounds. They glowed soft lime green, knitting torn flesh back together.

Archie shifted into his phoenix form, flames licking off his feathers.

"So what's the endgame?" he asked, voice crackling. "What's Incarceration planning?"

Ella looked at all of them.

"He's manipulating Don," she said steadily. "Incarceration doesn't fight with brute force. He fights with fear. He's forcing Don to relive every humiliating, awful memory—so when the time comes, he'll break. He'll turn to Incarceration, thinking he has no one else. And when he does…the prophecy ends. Don becomes the villain."

Power clenched his fists, sparks of dark blue energy crackling between them.

He lifted his head, eyes hard.

"Listen up."

Everyone turned to face him, battered but ready.

Power climbed onto the pile of rocks where Olsen had fallen and looked down at the group.

"I know a lot of us barely knew each other before today," he said, his voice rising, "but that doesn't matter anymore. All of you—every single one—were trained to be heroes. Some of you I taught myself. And now Don needs us. He needs our strength, our loyalty, and our belief in him."

He drew in a deep breath.

"He might lose himself. He might turn dark. But if we stand together, we can bring him back."

Power raised his fist high, energy flaring around him.

"I say we save our future Number One Hero—KX! WHO'S WITH ME?!"

A roar of voices exploded in the clearing—shouts of agreement, fierce and unbroken.

Sophia tossed out bundles of folded hero suits. Everyone scrambled to suit up, their determination shining brighter than any wound or scar.

They trained for hours, weapons clashing, elemental power roaring in every color.

When the sun finally sank behind the trees, they were ready.

Olsen, still recovering, climbed onto Kayson's back.

They formed up, Power standing tall in the center, sparks dancing across his skin.

He smirked, eyes locked on the dark horizon.

"Don…" he murmured. "Here we come."

Dark Don stood atop a low mountain ridge, hidden beneath a thick canopy of trees and brambles.

The night sky loomed black as ink. Silver moonlight spilled through ragged clouds, glinting off his silvery scales. Crickets trilled softly in the darkness, and the wind whispered through the leaves.

Then came the rain—steady and cold—patting the branches in a slow, rhythmic beat. Dark Don slipped out of the brush, his gleaming scales almost luminous under the moon. He slid down the slick slope, landing in the muddy grass with a squelch. His cybernetic boots were instantly caked in wet earth.

He scanned the clearing. Dense ferns and shadows closed in on all sides.

"Hmph," he muttered. "Not here."

Thunder cracked overhead, and lightning illuminated the clearing in a blinding flash. That was when he saw him.

Don.

He hung limp in a snarl of thorny vines, wearing a ragged, dirt-streaked

hero suit. The hood that once framed his dragon-like mask now sagged crookedly. His gloves had split at the seams into clawed tatters. The scarf around his neck was shredded and trailed behind him like the ragged banner of a fallen king. His face hung low, hidden by the shadows.

For a moment, everything went still.

Dark Don took a wary step forward, his tail brushing Don's cheek. The contact left a smear of rain and mud. He stepped back, eyes narrowing.

In Don's hand rested a hexagonal black gem, seeping a slow swirl of dark energy.

The Incarceration Gem.

Is he dead? Dark Don thought. I could end him here. But… what if he already is?

His gaze shifted—and his heart lurched.

The Grolian Beast lay slumped beside Don, green blood oozing from its bark-like hide. Its massive neck was snapped clean, splintered bone jutting from the wound.

Dark Don's throat tightened. "Don… are you—"

"KX FORM!"

Celestial energy erupted around Don in a blinding blast, hurling Dark Don across the clearing.

"What the—!" he shouted, skidding through the mud.

Don tore himself free of the vines, breathing hard. His wings twitched violently, droplets of blood flicking from fresh wounds.

"WHO DARES WAKE ME FROM MY REST?!" His voice boomed, layered with something cold and unrecognizable.

He stalked forward, eyes glowing with furious light.

Dark Don wiped the blood from his mouth. "What the hell is wrong with you?!"

Don didn't answer. He dropped the gem with a dull clink and kept walking, dark celestial energy pulsing around him.

"I see you've crawled back to challenge me again," he growled. "Don't waste my time."

His wings flared wide. His tail, striped with fresh scars, lashed the

ground.

Dark Don rose, lunar energy crackling around his fists. "Hmph, you asked for it."

They collided in a shockwave that split the night apart. Celestial and lunar power ripped through the forest, flattening trees in every direction.

Locked in each other's grip, they rocketed skyward.

Don struck first, hammering punches into Dark Don's guard. Dark Don blocked and countered with a savage elbow to the jaw, but Don only snarled and brought his heel down in an axe kick that sent Dark Don spinning to the forest floor.

Dark Don slammed through the trees, crashing in a burst of lunar energy.

Don's silhouette blazed overhead. He dropped fast as a comet, smashing onto Dark Don's chest with an impact that shook the mountain itself.

The ground exploded in light.

Before Dark Don could even recover, Don hauled him up and hurled him through five trees in a row. Each trunk shattered on impact.

Don's voice thundered through the rain. "SCOURGE DON'S FATE!"

He became a swirling vortex of celestial power and drove his fist into Dark Don's gut. A wave of force erupted outward, flattening everything in a hundred-foot radius.

Dark Don staggered, blood streaming from his mouth, but he refused to fall. He built a shield of lunar energy just in time to meet Don's next attack.

"SINGULAR DROPKICK!"

Don's leg smashed through the barrier like glass, the shockwave sending Dark Don tumbling across the clearing.

He rolled to his feet, gasping, and threw a desperate flurry of strikes—hook, hook, backhand, kick. Don weaved around them with unnatural speed.

Celestial chains snapped into existence. Don anchored them to two trees behind him and leaned back like a slingshot, charging power into his leg.

"150% INCREASE—OVERRIDING KICK!"

He shot forward faster than thought, his foot colliding with Dark Don's face.

The air shattered like brittle glass.

The shockwave flattened the last standing trees, tore the underbrush from the earth, and left Dark Don kneeling in a crater, dazed and bleeding.

Don stalked past him, his gaze cold and unblinking.

"Rufty Mountains," he murmured, his voice a chilling whisper. "Then Celestia will burn."

A swirl of darkness coalesced beside him. Incarceration emerged from the shadows, smirking.

"You're getting quite good at this," he said lightly. "Tell me, why not go finish the job? Kill your friends. It would be… efficient."

Scourge Don didn't look at him. His eyes stayed fixed on the path ahead.

"Perhaps," he said, his voice low and hollow. "But first, I will raze Celestia. After that… no one will doubt me again."

Incarceration laughed softly. "You have a gift for cruelty. I respect that."

His smile widened. "Just don't forget—first, the Rufty Mountains. Then we end this prophecy together."

Scourge Don inclined his head slightly, voice dripping with venom. "I appreciate your guidance… But don't think you control me."

Incarceration arched a brow. "What does that mean?"

"DON!"

The shout cracked through the trees.

Both of them turned.

The crew stood at the edge of the clearing, weapons drawn, hero suits slick with rain.

Don's eyes narrowed, saying nothing.

Javier raised his hands, his voice soft. "Don… we don't want to fight you. Please—just come back."

Everyone stared at him in stunned disbelief.

Javier laughed weakly. "Worth a try?"

Incarceration sighed. "Come out."

Six monstrous shapes crashed through the underbrush—the Illegals in

their beast forms.

Ironz. Azure. King. Rusty. Darn. Vironos.

Vironos prowled forward, scales glinting in the lightning.

Don turned away without another word. Incarceration slipped into the trees.

"I'll get him!" Power shouted.

He sprinted after Incarceration, blue energy sparking at his heels.

And as the storm swallowed them, he whispered to himself:

"Goodbye."

CH.20 The Scorchings

King Dreadixz sat on his throne, tapping his fingers on the armrests with a menacing look. He looked the same as always, but something was different—his eyes. His right eye had a red ring-shaped mark around it, an injury from Archie's explosion back in the ice storm at Eclitsic. He sat there, whistling a villainous tune in peace, until—

(KNOCK! KNOCK KNOCK!)

The portcullis rattled. Dreadixz looked down at the entrance from his throne and said, "Come in…"

The gate opened, and two Lunaranite guards walked in, dragging two prisoners in cuffs. Dreadixz clenched his fists and gritted his teeth in frustration.

"Tell me, guards, who are these two?" he asked.

One prisoner was a female Celestianite dragon with white scales and a shimmering purple spine running down from her head to her tail. Her eyes were golden yellow, her underbelly was deep indigo, and she had long, sharp, curvy dark purple horns. A yellow feather sat at the tip of her tail, and her snout was bright yellow.

The other prisoner was a black-scaled Flamenite dragon with a red underbelly and scars covering his body. His snout was jet black, and his talons were razor-sharp, sharper than a Lunaranite's teeth. His horns were completely red, and his fiery orange eyes had a shade of black in them. He hissed at one of the guards, struggling against their grip.

"These dragons were caught sneaking into Lunaranite territory, also

known as 'Foreshade,'" the first guard explained.

Dreadixz laughed. "Hah! What are these little wyrmlings doing in my kingdom? What do they want from us?"

"They were looking for something," the other guard added. "Like these."

He pulled out three Power Gems—red, blue, and green.

Dreadixz scoffed and turned to the prisoners. "Well, thank you for the gift, guards. You've actually done something useful for once."

"Just let us go already!" the Celestianite snapped, struggling against her cuffs.

The Flamenite roared violently, thrashing in anger.

Dreadixz smirked and snapped his fingers. "So, identify yourselves, wyrmlings."

"We're not wyrmlings!" the Celestianite shouted. "Just let us go, and we'll leave! You can keep the Power Gems if you want!"

"NOT until I know who you are," Dreadixz scowled.

The Celestianite was about to argue but signed instead. "My name is Starla…"

- **Starla** — Astral Elemental Celestianite
- *Joyful, teasing, full of sass. Knows how to push Don's buttons on purpose but always has his back when it matters.*

Dreadixz grinned. "Ah, so we've got the King's daughter here, huh? Where's your mother?"

"She's in Zeriath, fulfilling a long-forgotten promise," Starla replied.

Dreadixz clapped his hands. "So, you're a stray. You're all alone. King Vigilzante is dead, and your mother is gone. Guess you've got no one now."

Dreadixz turned to the other prisoner. "And who's the Flamenite?"

Starla growled but answered. "His name is Scorch. He's usually mute,

and he has a condition that keeps him stuck in his beast form."

Scorch thrashed wildly as the guards struggled to hold him down. Then, he turned to Dreadixz and roared, filled with rage.

Dreadixz laughed. "So full of anger, isn't he?"

Then his expression darkened. "Well, you can let the Flamenite go, but kill the Celestianite."

"ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!" Starla roared. "COME ON! LET ME GO!"

Scorch went berserk, his body shaking with fury. He turned to Starla as if to say, I'm not leaving without you.

Then, with a powerful shake, he broke free from the cuffs. Dropping onto all fours, he let out a fierce roar that sent the guards running. He locked eyes with one guard, cocked his head, then lunged at him with terrifying speed.

The guard barely had time to react before Scorch pinned him to the ground. The guard screamed in terror. The Power Gems slipped from his hands and clattered to the floor.

Then, without hesitation, Scorch sank his teeth into the guard's skull. Blood dripped from the top of the man's head down to Scorch's snout. With a slow, merciless pull, he tore the guard's head from his body. Blood gushed from the neck, staining the floor.

Scorch turned to the other guard and, with no remorse, devoured the severed head right in front of him. The second guard stood frozen, his legs shaking, his eyes wide with terror. Then, Scorch swallowed the head whole.

That was enough. The second guard bolted from the room in pure fear.

Scorch then turned to Starla and breathed fire onto her cuffs. The metal melted away, freeing her.

Dreadixz jumped up from his throne, his eyes landing on the headless corpse sitting on the red rug.

With a deep, guttural growl, he transformed into his massive Lunaranite Dragon form. His roar shook the entire room, louder than any Lunaranite's roar before.

He leaped from his throne, landing hard on the ground, and charged at

Scorch. He swiped at him with his talons, then spun to strike with his tail.

Scorch staggered back, but when Dreadixz's tail swung toward him, he caught it in his jaws.

Dreadixz screamed in agony.

Then, Scorch did something no Flamenite had ever done to the King of the Lunaranites—he lit his teeth on fire.

The flames blazed hotter than any normal fire. Scorch bit down harder, and Dreadixz's tail began to melt. Blood dripped as the bones at the tip of the tail were exposed.

Dreadixz roared in pain and lunged at Scorch, sinking his own teeth into the Flamenite's neck.

He slammed Scorch to the ground, holding him there as Scorch flailed his talons frantically, feeling the fangs dig into his throat.

Scorch roared in pain, his tail thrashing wildly.

Then, Starla lunged at Dreadixz and bit into his throat. She tackled him down, whipping him with her tail.

Dreadixz tumbled back. Scorch got up, shaking with rage.

Dreadixz stood his ground, blood dripping from his wounds. He glared at them and growled, "Damn… you two are hostile dragons."

Starla turned to Scorch urgently. She grabbed the Power Gems and faced the entrance. "Let's get out of here!"

Scorch turned and followed as they stormed out of the throne room, leaving Dreadixz bruised and beaten on the ground—his tail destroyed.

At The Grolian Forest (Nighttime): They were cooked. The group of young Pre-Heroes were surrounded by the Illegals. Vironos growled while Dark Olsen roared from above the trees.

"Shoot! We're gonna be chopped to pieces if we don't do something now!" Prince exclaimed as he held onto his lightning bolts, radiating with blue electricity.

Eli looked around frantically, trying to think of a plan because of the gravity of the situation they were in. Then something sparked in his mind.

He turned back to the rest of the crew behind him, and then he used sign language and gestures that meant, "Get out of here, me and the other six will take on these fakes."

William cocked his head in confusion, "What is he talking about?" he whispered to Javier.

Javier shrugged.

Sophia looked back, and the forest was already foggy. Power had left to go find Incarceration and Scourge Don, and they were already alone with no leader. She clenched her fists, then she looked from behind again.

"He's saying we gotta go, just follow me, I can see through the fog!" she ordered.

She sprinted across the forest with everyone else following her, leaving Olsen (who was barely on his feet), Prince, Demaurion, Archie, and Ella. Ella looked at Olsen, worried.

"I don't know if he's gonna be able to fight. Will he be alright?"

"I'll be fine. As long as I can cover my legs with solid rock, I'll be able to move them again," Olsen reassured her.

Brown rocks started to form on Olsen's legs, slithering around them like armor. They stared at the Illegals with determined faces. Then they morphed into their beast forms, now standing face-to-face with their own dark counterparts.

Eli, as a pale green Wyvern with a long spiky tail and four horns on his head, stood tall. His scales were hard and rough, a dark green color, and hexagonal in shape. Eli crawled toward Vironos the Drake. They stood right in front of each other, snarling.

Eli flared his wings. "Let the battle begin…."

Power's Search for Incarceration:

Power ran through the forest at the speed of light, searching for Incarceration as he dodged trees and thorns. The raid fell on him rapidly as lightning flashed across the sky. Thunder boomed, and the trees moved

wildly due to the wind. He got soaking wet as he sprinted across the rainy forest, surrounded by thick, dark trees and large thorn leaves. As he ran, he heard a stick snap.

He turned to the right, looking through the trees, and saw Incarceration standing alone in the rain, surrounded by tall, bark-covered trees.

Before Incarceration could leave, Power stopped him with a yell.

"**HEY!**"

Incarceration stopped in his tracks and slowly turned to Power, his eyes glowing a menacing red. The rain poured even more, and the storm intensified.

"You had something to do with this, DIDN'T YOU?" Power said, clenching his fists as he walked up to Incarceration.

Incarceration crossed his arms and scoffed, "Hmph. I don't know. Maybe I am, maybe I'm not. But don't worry, at least everything is in check."

Power gritted his teeth in anger and fury. "In check? IN CHECK?! You've manipulated this guy to the point where he's now broken!"

"You really are trying to get him to your side, and it seems like your plan has worked. Look, Incarceration, I know you're almost as smart as Intelligence, maybe even smarter, but if we try our hardest, I know we can get the old Don back. Instead of this reformed dark and edgy Don, we want the REAL Don back! So I'm only gonna tell you once. Bring. Him. Back."

Incarceration sighed, "You know, Power, you were such a 'lovable' Zenith back in the old days. But haven't you noticed the amount of power that has increased over the years?!"

"Well, I was tired of you from the start. Ever since you started leading the Zeniths, I was jealous of you…"

Power's anger slowly faded. He looked down, blinking a few times. Then he slowly turned to Incarceration.

"You were jealous? Why?"

"BECAUSE YOU HAD THE FAME, POWER!" Incarceration shot back with fury. "YOU HAD ALL OF THE GLORY! YOU HAD ALL OF THE PRAISE! I WAS IGNORED! AN OUTCAST! MOCKED BY MY OWN

TEAM!"

Power was about to say something, but Incarceration interrupted, "AND YOU NEVER HELPED! LIKE A REAL COMPANION SHOULD'VE! OVERBRAWL WAS INSANE! FURY WAS WORSE! AND I CAN'T TAKE STRENGTH!"

Incarceration kicked a large rock, shattering it into pieces. He pointed at Power, full of anger and emotion.

"YOU NEVER HELPED ME! YET YOU HELPED EVERYBODY ELSE IN THIS WORLD BUT ME! I THOUGHT YOU WERE A HERO, POWER! A HERO!"

"The reason why I manipulated Don and made him go through all this to turn to me, is so I can feel better for myself!" A red tear started to fall from his eyelids, and his eyes flickered from red to blue. "IT WASN'T FAIR THAT NOBODY HAD THE PAIN THAT I WENT THROUGH! SO IN ORDER FOR IT TO HAPPEN, I HAD TO FORCE IT!"

"JUST REMEMBER THIS, POWER," he charged up nightmarish energy on his arms, glaring at Power as the black energy collided with red crackling energy. "EVERY VILLAIN HAS THEIR REASONS TO BECOME A VILLAIN! NOT ALL OF THEM BECOME VILLAINS JUST BECAUSE THEY WANTED TO! THEY COULD BE HURT, MISTREATED, MOCKED IN ANY KIND OF WAY! THEY CAN'T CONTROL IT! THEY CAN'T COPE WITH IT! THE ONLY THING THEY COULD DO IS TAKE MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS!"

His voice became shaky but still fierce and furious. "That's… a villain story…" He sniffed as he started to cry a little. "You'll never understand, Power… never understand the pain…."

Power looked down in sorrow, feeling guilt in his stomach. "Look, I'm sorry you were treated this way… I didn't realize that you even had emotions. Just come back to being a Zenith again… Let's just talk this out, and everything will be alright."

Power walked toward him, reaching his arm out. Then Incarceration looked up at Power, and his left eye began to grow larger and transform into a more circular shape. Cracks formed around the eye, and then he

jolted up at Power, slamming his chin with an uppercut that shot Power into the sky like a rocket.

Power crashed into the trees like a blue lightning bolt. He got up, feeling the leaves falling on him.

"What was that for?!" Power yelled as he got up.

Then Incarceration teleported right in front of him. He struck Power with a punch to the gut and then an uppercut to the chest. The impact caused a huge black shockwave to ripple through the forest, snapping trees in half. Power was sent spiraling into the air. Incarceration teleported above him to dropkick him back to the ground.

As Power was being launched downward, Incarceration dashed toward him, dark energy swirling around him. Power crashed through a rock, but he got up instantly as Incarceration was already in front of him, ready to strike with a blow to the chest.

Power grabbed his arm, then twirled around, backhanding his body to the ground. Incarceration got up, dark energy charging in his fists. He struck Power's ribs harder than ever, creating an earth-shattering and air-splitting shockwave through the entire forest.

Power was still in the air when Incarceration started throwing rapid punches as fast as a bullet. Then he punched Power in the gut one last time, launching Power through the forest. Power got struck by a few trees as he traveled through the air.

Incarceration followed him, jumping from tree to tree, infusing his body with dark energy. He jumped off the last tree and aerial-kicked Power with one of his legs.

When the attack struck, Power's ribs felt like they shattered throughout his body. He was completely broken. Power crashed through the final tree, cutting it in half. He landed on the ground, sliding on his back through the dirt and mud. Incarceration stood right in front of him with his hands on his hips.

"Why need your help? If you just don't care?" he said, crossing his arms and glaring at Power.

"I do care!" Power exclaimed as he tried to get up.

Incarceration stepped on his body, forcing him down. "Yeah right. I'll make sure I remember that. You and your Zenith friends still think I'm weak. What is this now, Power? The one and only hero forced on the ground, trying to fight the 4th most powerful Zenith in the entire universe. And his name is Power…"

"I don't want to fight you!" Power said, struggling to get up.

Incarceration scoffed, keeping him down. He looked at Power with a glare and a frown. "You could've done better… brother…"

Incarceration wandered off into the deep forest. Power sat there, and then something struck his mind. It was Incarceration's voice, saying, "Also, Don's not coming back to you… never."

Blue energy burst out of Power as his eyes blazed with energy, like flames. Lightning lit up the entire sky as Power stood up. The blue energy surged through his body, and his patience was pushed to the limit.

This was his first time, his very first time being angry. He was all-loving, old but young, chill, and easygoing, but now he had to unleash his anger for the first time. He knew Don should be released from Incarceration's imprisonment. He knew Don should return to who he used to be, instead of the Don they had now: Scourge Don.

Power rushed toward Incarceration, his energy intensifying as he got faster and faster toward him. Incarceration looked behind and realized he messed up.

Through the thunder and lightning, through the rain and through the trees, through the chaos and destruction, Power jumped out right in front of him to throw in a devastating bone-shattering "OVERPOWERED OVERHAND PUNCH!" He smashes his first against Incarceration's face over him like an uppercut.

Then the fists acted like it was glued onto Incarceration's face, and then Incarceration shot up to the sky like a black shooting star as the impact from the blow created a land destroying shockwave across the forest. It flipped air and it broke the sky itself, shattering it. Wind started to go violent and it was thrashing around like crazy, whipping trees only to slice them and cut them. The air smashed the environment, flattening the area.

He looked at his fists, realizing that Incarceration had vanished. He looked around confused, and then he yelled through the air, "I'LL COME BACK BROTHER!!!"

CH.21 Starla Meets the Broken One

The dragons soared through a storm of wild rain and thunder, lightning cracking across the midnight sky.

The heavens above were drowned in shifting grays, pouring down in sheets that pelted the forest below. Trees swayed.

The ground churned into mud. Every drop echoed like footsteps of chaos. High above, Starla and Scorch beat their wings against the storm, weaving through the rain as flashes of light lit their path. They were fleeing—fast. After that last attack, they knew Dreadixz would be coming for them.

It was only a matter of time. Starla's ears twitched. She looked down through the curtain of rain and thick leaves. "Let's hide in the forest," she called to Scorch over the roar of thunder. "They won't find us there." Without hesitation, they dove toward the trees. The wind clawed at them as they sliced through the canopy, landing in the thick, muddy underbrush. They checked their surroundings quickly, scanning the shadows for danger. "I think we're good,"

Starla said. "I'll shift into human form." Her body shimmered with glowing light as she morphed. The beast form faded, revealing her base form—more humanlike, but still holding key features. Her wings remained, smaller now, still elegant. Her tail twitched behind her. Her horns curled slightly over her blond hair, now streaked with indigo markings.

The only thing that changed completely… was her eyes. Once golden, now a piercing sky-blue. Scorch gave her a side-glance, his expression silently asking, *What now?*

Starla adjusted her violet and navy jacket, stepping cautiously through the brush. Then she froze. "You hear that?" she whispered, eyes narrowing. A sound echoed through the forest—low, guttural, not human. A scream, almost… but not quite. Something more primal. Scorch instantly stepped in front of her, fire simmering in his throat.

He growled, ready to ignite anything that moved. The scream rang out again. Without exchanging a word, the two pushed forward through branches and soaked leaves, following the sound. The forest began to thin out as they arrived at the Rufty Mountains. Towering peaks loomed around them, walls of jagged gray stone stretching into the stormy sky.

The mountains stood like ancient giants, silent and cold. Between them was a wide canyon floor littered with broken rocks, stubborn plants, and old leaves swirling in the wind. Then the scream echoed again—closer.

They ran toward the center of the pass. But suddenly, something sharp whistled through the air. Thwip! A dagger hurtled toward them. Scorch's reflexes kicked in. He snatched the blade between his jaws and dropped it to the ground with a metallic clang. They looked down at it. A steel dagger, double-edged, coated in flickering violet energy that shimmered with celestial power.

Blood stained its handle—dark brown, dried in streaks. Not much. Whoever used it had done most of the damage with fists, not blades. But before they could speak— Starla looked up. Her eyes went wide.

Lying at the base of one of the mountains… was a body. A massive one. A Drake—the legendary beast of Rufty Mountain. Dead. Its body was stone-like, rocky scales cracked and stained with blood. Its jagged tail curled lifelessly around it.

Sharp horns jutted from its head. No teeth in its mouth, but its stone jaws had triangular ridges sharp enough to bite through steel. A dagger was still embedded in its neck, driven deep through the thick stone armor. Blood gushed around it.

Another spear, made of hardened earth, pierced clean through its throat and stood anchored into the ground. Starla covered her mouth, stumbling back in horror. Even at twelve… this was too much. "I—I think it's time

we go," she whispered, her voice shaking. But just as they turned— Snap. Dark indigo chains burst from the air and wrapped around them, yanking both into the sky.

Celestial bindings twisted around their limbs, suspending them midair. Scorch roared, flailing and snarling, his tail whipping wildly. Fire poured from his mouth uncontrollably. He was going feral. Then—someone dropped from the sky.

A figure landed on the ground with a heavy thud, mud splashing around his boots. Starla strained to get a better look. He wore a dark, battle-ravaged suit—once a hero's uniform, now torn and stained with blood and dirt. His dragon-like mask was cracked, crooked, nearly falling off. A fresh wound leaked blood from beneath it, trickling from his right eye. His left eye burned with dark purple celestial energy. One of his wings was completely gone. The other—barely functional—dragged behind him, riddled with scars.

A tattered, dark violet cape hung from his shoulders, swaying with each step. His gloves were shredded, resembling claws more than fabric. His boots were falling apart. In the center of his chest, etched in bold black ink, were two letters in Trade Winds: KX. "HEY! What's the big idea?!" Starla snapped, struggling against the chains. The figure didn't speak.

He just looked at her—tilted his head—and snapped his fingers. The chains vanished. They hit the ground hard, coughing, but free. Scorch growled, stepping forward, flames simmering again—but Starla held out a hand. "Wait…" She stared at the figure. Something about him… was familiar. "What's your name? And… did you kill that beast?"

The boy coughed once, voice low and tired. "I'm Don," he said. "But I guess… I'll be Scourge Don forever now."

He turned away and began to walk, dragging his steps through the mud. Before he got far, he side-eyed Starla with a glare that could kill. "Who do you claim to be?" Starla held her ground. "I'm Starla. Princess of Celestia. And you're Don, right? One of the Chosen Ones? I heard about you. I just… didn't expect you to be like this." Don shrugged. "Whatever."

He kept walking, the darkness seeming to follow him. Starla watched

him fade into the storm. Something stirred in her chest—something confusing, something… strange. She didn't understand it yet. And he was nothing like she imagined.

In a Random Cave at the Rufty Mountains:

Daysni zipped through the air in her ghost form, phasing through hanging rocks and dripping stalactites while Lonnie Mae gazed silently out the cave entrance. The storm outside flashed white-hot lightning across the sky. Meanwhile, Keyler dangled upside down from the ceiling, lazily swaying by his spider-silk threads. Everyone else stayed tucked deep inside the cave, tense and quiet. Hiding. From what? From Dark Don. From Incarceration. From Dreadixz. From whatever the Lunaranites decided to throw at them next.

It was only a matter of time before one of those monsters sniffed them out. And worse—worse than all of that—were The Illegals. Unstoppable. Unmatched. And lately… unleashed. "Why were the Illegals even released?" someone finally asked. Sophia stood slowly, casting a glance around the dim firelit chamber.

The small flame in the corner flickered under the draft of thunder outside. She eyed the cave's mouth—storm clouds thick and angry. "They're the Illegals," she muttered. "They shouldn't even be in this war." "They're supposed to stay locked in Foreshade. That forest is forbidden for a reason…" Her voice trailed off as her thoughts spiraled.

Ella had told her about Incarceration's twisted grip on Don. But something about it didn't sit right anymore. What if it wasn't just about breaking him? "What if Incarceration doesn't just want to manipulate Don?" Sophia said aloud.

"What if he needs him for something bigger… something beyond just taking over Avangard?" The group fell silent, blinking at her. Then suddenly—laughter. "Bro, what?" Keyler cackled, falling from his web and landing in a giggling heap. "He already broke Don. What more do you

think he wants? That guy is the Lunaranites!" Anhia scoffed. "Let him keep Don. Not like we need him anymore."

Silence. The laughter cut like a snapped string. Everyone turned to Anhia with that same deadpan "Seriously?" stare. "What?!" she snapped. "Am I the only one thinking straight? Daysni, back me up?" Daysni shook her head, smirking.

"Nah. If Don's gone, who else am I gonna annoy besides Olsen?" Then—click. The sound of a gun cocking. William had his white Valorent blaster aimed dead center at Anhia's cheek. "Yup. I say we shoot her." "WHOA WHOA WHOA!" Javier yelled, throwing his hands up. "Let's not start murdering people. That's—like—super illegal. And violent! And messed up!"

Kwa'asja raised a paw. "Anyone got leaves? Or vines? And a bed? I'm starving and tired." Lonnie Mae sighed and summoned a thick green vine from the cave floor. One as wide as a fridge. It swayed like it had a mind of its own. Kwa'asja morphed into her armadillo form and chomped it like it was a burrito. Meanwhile, Kai the Hric was pacing frantically, wings twitching.

His friend—his other half—had turned against them under Incarceration's influence. He slumped to the floor, head down. Emely gently patted his shoulder. "He'll come back," she said. "I know he will." Sophia exhaled and clapped her hands once.

"Alright. Focus up. Hear me out." "Incarceration isn't just trying to use Don—he's trying to betray the Lunaranites. Just like he did with the Zeniths." Fedjina raised an eyebrow, wings stretching wide. "So what, he's gonna argue with King Dreadixz and dip?" "No," said Angel, his owl-form feathers glinting violet and blue. "I think Sophia means something deeper than that." Sophia nodded, fists clenched.

"Exactly. What if Incarceration wants to rule Avangard—not for Dreadixz. For himself. Maybe not even all of Avangard… maybe just Foreshade." Her eyes burned with certainty now. "Think about it. He doesn't serve anyone. Never has. When he tricked Don into turning into coal, where was Dreadixz then? When Don killed the Hydra, it didn't even

come back. You think Dreadixz signed off on that? No.

That was Incarceration's move. This was his plan the whole time—and we played into it." She took a breath. "When me, Ella, Olsen, and Javier were in hiding… we saw it. Don and the fliers got ambushed by Lunaranites. But I saw a shadow—someone perched on one of the Lunaranites. I ignored it… thought it was a trick of the light. But it wasn't." She looked at each of them, voice trembling.

"Incarceration jumped off that Lunaranite's back. Punched Don straight into the dirt. Sent him flying." "And when Don landed in Eclitsic—he thought he helped people. Jocabed and Emely even said he did. But it wasn't real. It was a dream." "Incarceration made him sleep with the Nightmare Element. He crafted a dream to make Don think he was winning. But he wasn't. It was all fake."

She paused, letting it all settle. "Incarceration's playing a long game. And when he's full of pride? He'll burn the Lunaranites down to take the throne himself." Mason—silent till now—stood up slowly, dropping his half-eaten doughnut to the cave floor. "Then we find him." His voice sharpened with resolve. "And we bring Don back. No matter what."

Sophia stepped out of the cave, the storm welcoming her with a roar. Rain poured down in curtains. Lightning streaked across the sky. Thunder cracked like a war drum. And for the first time in a while… someone finally moved with purpose. Lightning split the sky as rain hammered the battlefield deep in the heart of Rufty Mountains

In the Grolian Forest:

Thunder cracked overhead, echoing the ferocity of the battle below. Claws slashed, metal clanged, and screams pierced the storm. Ella leapt onto Rusty's back, her claws ripping through his hide as he roared beneath her. Nearby, Olsen tore into Dark Olsen's reinforced legs, biting and striking with primal rage. High above them, the sky became a battleground of its own.

Prince and Dark Prince—also known as King—raced through the storm

like twin bolts of lightning. Rain poured as they zigzagged across the clouds, each one a blur of elemental power. Prince's feathers sparked with live current, his speed unmatched, but Dark Prince trailed arcs of magnetic electricity behind him, like a comet of pure voltage. They collided in midair with a deafening boom, shockwaves tearing through the stormclouds.

Lightning danced around them as Prince streaked forward, slamming into King with a crushing beak-strike, then diving toward the earth like a meteor. Their impact lit up the forest in a massive electrical explosion that knocked over trees and split the ground. Both warriors morphed back to their regular forms. Prince rose first, spun, and landed a blinding punch to King's jaw. Blood flew from King's mouth as he stumbled back, snarling.

Prince launched forward, punching King's gut with a charged attack that hurled him across the forest floor. King flipped and skidded, then locked eyes with Prince.

He began charging up, magnetic electricity crackling and coiling around him like a snake. He lifted his arms, shouting, "TAKE THIS!" and fired bolts of magnetism from his fingers, faster than bullets. Prince was caught in the blast, electricity dancing across his body. King blitzed him from all angles, appearing and vanishing with each strike, his fists a blur. With a final, monstrous punch, he sent Prince flying through trees and brush.

As King prepared to finish it, his magnetic energy dragged the battlefield behind him—trees, vines, debris all following his motion like possessed objects. Prince saw it all coming. He clenched his fists. "Magnetic surge, huh? Do better." Electricity surged through him. His hair lit up, a blue glow spreading across his body as his form began to shift.

Electricity spiraled around him in tighter and tighter coils until he erupted in a flash of raw power. Prince wasn't just glowing—he was electricity now. He had become something else. Something more. He had become Voltron. His fists crackled with energy. His eyes glowed with intensity. A V etched into his left eye, a P in the right. Voltron Prince had arrived. "You know what's funny?" he smirked. "Let's take this to the next level."

King roared, electricity bursting from him as he matched the transformation. "If there's a Voltron, there's a Xoltron. COME ON, BABY!" They clashed, lightning streaking from the impact, their shockwaves shaking the very earth.

The battle became a blur of fists, sparks, and fury. They punched, dodged, soared through the storm, clashing like titans. Voltron soared up, then dove, catching King in tendrils of lightning. Spinning into a vortex, he launched him into the ground with a move called, "50 THUNDEROUS SEASONS!" The explosion shook the forest, a geyser of light and energy erupting into the stormy sky.

Voltron landed beside the smoldering crater and struck again with a crackling uppercut. "VOLTRON'S PROMISE!" King rocketed into the air. Voltron followed with a punch to the gut so powerful it shattered the air. Then, in a blur of motion, Voltron vanished and reappeared around King, striking from every direction like a barrage of thunderbolts. Then came the final strike. A scream cut through the storm: "THE THIRD CHOSEN ONE!" The world exploded with light.

Dark Prince slammed into the ground, bleeding and broken. Voltron stood above him, triumphant. "Ooh," he said with a cocky grin. "I thought things were about to get wild. What happened?" King struggled to his feet, smirking through blood. Prince's expression hardened.

"You know," he said, walking forward slowly, "I used to wonder what kind of world we'd live in if none of this ever happened. If we were just… normal. But this—this is what we were chosen for. I get it now." Suddenly, the forest grew quiet. A slow, rhythmic clanking echoed through the rain-drenched battlefield.

Everyone froze. Prince turned. Emerging from the trees was a figure bathed in violet aura. A Zenith. His body shimmered like an animated silhouette, glowing eyes locked onto Prince. In his hand: all the Power Gems. On his arm: a futuristic, steel-armored watch pulsing with power. The Zenith dropped the Gems and smirked. "Well," he said coolly, "if it isn't the lovely heroic crew." He turned to the Illegals, who had also stopped fighting. "You guys can go on. I'll take care of them." Prince clenched his

fists, eyes darting toward the mysterious figure standing beneath the dark sky.

"Who the heck are you?!" The figure tilted his head, smug. "I don't know… maybe you'll find out." He snapped his fingers. Suddenly, eleven Lunaranites burst from the trees like shadows made flesh. The storm above slowly faded, the rain easing to a misty drizzle—but the clouds still churned, black and menacing.

The crew instinctively backed into a tight formation, tension spiking. The Lunaranites surrounded them with cold precision, weapons drawn, locking every angle.

There was no way out. The figure stood calmly in the middle, purple energy crackling and pulsing around a floating orb at his hands. It whirred like a charged motor, glowing in deep violet hues. He didn't even touch it—the orb just spun and hovered, dancing between his fingers like it was alive. He smirked, baring razor-sharp teeth that gleamed under the silver light of the moon. Everyone was sweating bullets.

Olsen could barely keep upright. "Oh, awesome! Lunaranites in every corner! Perfect! Just what I needed after getting slammed by a metallic brachiosaurus tail!" Archie glared. "WHO EVEN ARE YOU?!" The figure raised an eyebrow. "Hmm… you're thinking about running, huh." The crew froze. Because that's exactly what they were thinking. The figure's voice dropped into a teasing growl. "The little Earth guy's even thinking about eating rocks."

"HEY! YOU CAN'T JUST—THAT'S A VIOLATION OF PRIVACY!" Olsen snapped, wide-eyed. The figure shrugged. "Oh well." He clenched the orb tightly in one hand.

The Power Gems suddenly lit up with a dark violet glow and started to levitate. Ella gasped, looking up. "What are you doing?! Leave them alone!" From the earth, glowing purple chains erupted like snakes and wrapped around the crew—fast. They bound arms, legs, even torsos. Some dropped to their knees, others struggled to stay standing. Demaurion went feral, roaring like a true Leviathan. He thrashed, bit down on the chains with his fangs, but nothing gave.

Everyone fought to break free—but it was no use. The figure laughed, deep and cold. "You're all hopeless. Take 'em in, boys." He glanced up.

"Power Gems… scatter." The gems shot into the sky like missiles, reaching the clouds—then suddenly split off, vanishing in all directions like stars flung from a dying sun.

"No—NO!" Prince yelled, straining against the chains. "NOT THE POWER GEMS!" Lunaranites soared through the air, diving back to the ground like deadly hawks with spears raised. They landed with eerie silence, weapons aimed straight at the crew's hearts. Eli didn't speak. He just kept struggling against the chains, silent and furious.

Then—Vironos turned to the figure, grinning. "Thanks for your part. Now finish the job. We're heading to Phase Two." The Illegals sprinted off, leaving the crew trapped with the stranger. And then—boom. Something heavy touched down. At all costs. A towering shadow stepped forward. It was him. "DREADIXZ!" the entire crew roared in unison, voices filled with horror.

They were surrounded. Eleven Lunaranites. Chains. A mysterious figure. And now… Dreadixz himself, wings folded behind his back like a fallen god. His grin was monstrous. "You know, Krane," Dreadixz said, turning to the orb-wielding figure, "there's a reason I hired you. And you delivered." Demaurion thrashed harder. "LET US GO BEFORE I RIP YOUR HEAD OFF, YOU SON OF A—!" Dreadixz raised a hand casually. "Woah, woah, woah. No need to get hasty, my friend. We're just taking you to a little place called… Foreshade."

His voice oozed menace. And in that moment—just from that name alone—the crew knew… They were already doomed.

CH.22 The Reality of Scourge Don

Thunder cracked, and lightning split the clouds in blinding bursts. He couldn't see much through the fog, but he could hear everything—the wind, the storm, the soft drag of his torn tail across the wet ground.

He knew he'd made the right choice. Or at least, he told himself that. If his friends had truly cared, he thought, they would have understood. Now, he was convinced—he was alone, and maybe that was for the best.

A small metallic clink echoed across the valley.

Don's head snapped up.

A flicker of pink light shone through the fog: a hexagonal gem lying in the mud.

His eyes blazed with dark celestial energy. He recognized it instantly—another Power Gem.

He already carried the Incarceration Gem. He remembered the moment he'd found it—how he'd been trapped by the Grolian Beast, tangled in thorny vines as it prepared to devour him. The gem had been there, waiting, whispering.

He hadn't used it to betray his friends, not exactly. The gem had *changed* him. Flooded him with every bitter memory he had tried to bury. Consumed him until there was nothing left but Scourge Don.

And even if he'd wanted to turn back, he didn't know how.

So he hadn't tried.

He knelt, rain streaming down his mask, and picked up the pink gem. As he turned it over in his palm, a searing burst of red-orange flame tore

through the fog, aimed straight at his head.

He dodged instinctively, rolling aside as the blast sizzled into the mud.

A figure emerged from the darkness.

Krane.

The same Krane who'd attacked them in the Grolian Forest—the ex-Zenith with the Spirit Element, a power that merged flame and dark violet spiritual energy.

Beside him walked Overbrawl, Power's longtime nemesis. Overbrawl crossed his massive arms, a cruel smile on his face.

"We finally found you," Overbrawl drawled. "Took long enough."

Krane cracked his knuckles, eyes glowing with that nasty violet flame.

"Look, I just want some answers—and maybe a little fun while I'm at it."

Don's eyes narrowed, voice low and sharp.

"What answers?"

Krane smirked, leaning in like he's got the whole world on a string.

"Where's Incarceration hiding? You got the gems, so spill it—yeah or nah?"

Don didn't answer. Rain dripped off his hood, silence louder than thunder.

"No."

Overbrawl chuckled, eyes gleaming.

"Perfect. No Incarceration drama means we can get down to business."

Don raised an eyebrow, suspicious as hell.

"What business?"

Krane shrugged like it's the simplest thing in the world.

"We split the gems up. Scatter them so Incarceration can't sniff us out."

Don scoffed, fire lighting up his voice.

"Are you kidding? If you had them, why not just stash them somewhere safe? Splitting them is asking for trouble."

Krane's grin twisted dark.

"Listen, we stole those gems from you fools, but Dreadixz—he's paranoid. Told us to scatter 'em all over—Foreshade, Rufty Mountains, Celestia. Thinks it'll buy us time."

Then Krane's tone dropped, voice cold as ice.

"But real talk? If Incarceration catches us with any of those gems, he'll straight-up kill us all. No second chances. That's why scattering's the only move."

Don's jaw clenched so tight it might snap.

"You're playing a dangerous game."

Krane's eyes flickered with violet flame, deadly serious.

"Maybe. But I'm gonna be the one to take Incarceration down."

Don's jaw tightened. "You're lying."

Krane's smile didn't waver. "Think whatever you want."

"Where is he?" Don snarled.

Overbrawl's scarf fluttered in the wind as he stepped forward. "If you won't tell us—then you're useless."

"Agreed," Krane said, flame spiraling around his arms.

Their eyes locked on Don's.

A heartbeat later, all three lunged.

Don blurred forward, vaulted clean over them, and landed in a crouch behind their backs. His daggers flashed out, a streak of cold steel.

He struck for Krane's spine—but Krane spun and smashed a flaming fist into Don's gut, detonating a shockwave that blasted him skyward.

Overbrawl rocketed after him, seizing him by the collar and hurling him back to the ground. Don twisted midair and launched himself up again, colliding with Overbrawl in a flurry of strikes.

A spinning axe kick hammered Overbrawl to the dirt in a plume of dust.

Don hovered, breathing hard. Krane looked up, both fists glowing—violet spiritual energy coiling around flame. He unleashed a rapid-fire barrage of blasts, forcing Don to weave and dive through the air.

Don landed, whipping out his celestial chains. They shot forward, coiling around Krane's limbs.

As Overbrawl charged, Don spun, yanked Krane off the ground, and slammed him straight into Overbrawl's chest. Both enemies crashed to the mud in a tangled heap.

Don reeled his chains back in and stalked forward, eyes crackling.

"That all you've got?"

Krane glared up. "We're just getting started."

He blurred into motion, raining blows at Don's head and torso. Don dodged, but Krane pivoted and slammed a brutal side kick into his cheek. The impact sent him skidding across the flatland.

Overbrawl blurred forward, a shockwave propelling him into the air. He slammed down with both fists, detonating a chaotic blast that launched Don skyward once more.

Don righted himself, daggers flashing as Overbrawl closed in. They collided in midair, trading blows in a storm of sparks. Don flipped over him, seized Overbrawl by the throat, and hurled him back to the ground.

Landing in a crouch, Don sprinted at blinding speed, celestial energy rippling in his wake. Krane fired a salvo of violet blasts. Don dodged most—one exploded near his shoulder, sending shards of rock slicing past.

Krane teleported in front of him, driving an uppercut straight into Don's chin. The world blurred—

—and Don shot into the clouds, cape whipping behind him.

Through the rain, Overbrawl rose to meet him, arms spread wide. One hand seized Don's side—

—and erupted with a colossal explosion that shook the sky itself.

Don fell like a meteor.

Krane streaked up after him, a comet of violet fire. He caught Don mid-descent and smashed him back down in a thunderous impact that split the valley floor.

Don barely had time to register the pain before Krane rocketed up again, fist blazing. He drove it into Don's chest—

—and the world disappeared in a violet-white explosion that washed across the entire battlefield like a nuclear blast. Overbrawl moved in behind Don and fired another explosive blast that launched him into the air.

Before Don could catch his breath, Krane teleported above him and slammed a flaming fist straight into his chest, detonating a surge of fire. The explosion collided with a second blast from Overbrawl below,

catapulting Don even higher before gravity pulled him down like a falling meteor.

When he crashed, the impact unleashed a double shockwave of celestial energy that tore across the flatlands, cracking the earth in every direction.

Don lay facedown, battered and bloodied. His tattered clothes clung to him in strips.

Krane slowly descended to the ground, a smug smile curling across his lips as he held the pink Power Gem aloft. Overbrawl landed beside him, folding his arms with a sneer.

"Well, isn't this pathetic?" Krane taunted. "This is the future leader of the Celestianites? I doubt it."

"Should we end this, Overbrawl?"

"It's on the house, Krane. Why not?" Overbrawl replied, his body crackling with chaotic energy.

Don's fingers twitched against the dirt. He slowly lifted his head, glaring up at them through the mask.

"You really are something…" he growled.

Krane tilted his head. "I know exactly what you're thinking—some desperate last attack to kill me in one move. I've already planned for that." He smirked coldly.

Don planted a hand on the ground and pushed himself to his feet. A dark aura pooled around him, coiling up his arms.

"You haven't seen my full potential," he rasped.

He snapped his fingers.

Reality rippled, as if the universe itself were flinching away, and in an instant, he transformed—KX Don.

The two enemies stiffened, wide-eyed.

In the distance, celestial voices began to chant in unearthly harmony:

What an unpleasant dream, he'll get your love a chance... get your love a chance... get another chance... get a lover tonight!

KX Don took a single step forward—and vanished.

A thunderous boom echoed as he reappeared in front of Overbrawl, driving a fist into his face.

"VIOLENT VIOLENCE!"

The impact ruptured the earth, sending Overbrawl flying backward like a ragdoll.

Krane tried to retreat, but Don turned to him instantly, his eyes locked.

Krane hesitated—too late.

Don blurred forward and punched him skyward. He didn't stop. He struck again, and again, his fists moving at lightspeed in a blur of motion.

Krane hovered helplessly in the air, pummeled by dozens of blows before Don paused, his final punch charged with searing celestial energy.

"RAVAGE!"

He drove his fist into Krane's gut, triggering an explosion that lit the valley like sunrise.

Krane sailed upward, limbs limp.

Don shot after him, climbing faster than any jet.

What an unpleasant dream... he'll get your love a chance...

He overtook Krane, now above him in the clouds. Celestial fire ignited around his fists.

He hurled both hands downward.

"365 DAYS!"

Ten colossal, glowing fists materialized overhead, each one bigger than a house.

They slammed into Krane in sequence, each impact cracking the sky with sound. The air itself shattered into fragments like broken glass, and when the final fist struck, the resulting blast dwarfed any nuclear weapon ever unleashed.

Krane tumbled in midair, body flickering in and out of consciousness.

Don wasn't done.

He hurtled down to meet him, spinning faster and faster until his entire form was cloaked in black celestial energy.

"VIOLET VIOLENCE!"

The final kick smashed into Krane with apocalyptic force, releasing a shockwave that splintered the Rufty Mountains in half. Jagged cliffs sheared away and collapsed as rocks rained from the sky.

Krane plummeted, bouncing and rolling across the battlefield until he finally slid to a stop on his back, staring blankly upward. Purple cracks spread from his eye socket, and blood oozed from his chest.

Don appeared in front of him, silent. Smoke drifted around them.

He raised a clawed glove to cover his eye and let out a single, exhausted sigh as the KX energy faded.

Don knelt, picked up the Power Gem, and spoke in a low, contemptuous voice:

"Weak."

He turned to walk away.

"DON!"

The familiar voice made him pause.

He clenched his jaw as he adjusted his torn mask.

"Not them again…" he muttered.

Mason stepped out of the fog with the rest of the crew trailing behind.

Don turned just enough to look at them from the corner of his eye, then turned away again.

Mason called out, desperation cracking his voice.

"Don! Just come back—please!"

"Never."

Don's gaze sharpened, cold and unrecognizable.

"I'm done being mocked. Done being laughed at. Done with the embarrassment. Now, you'll all see who I really am."

Mason exhaled shakily, sounding like he'd already accepted defeat.

"Don…we *already* know who you are. You don't have to prove it."

Javier stepped up beside him. "He's right. You fought the Hydra alone and won."

Lonnie nodded. "You just destroyed Overbrawl like he was nothing."

Sophia said nothing at first, but William elbowed her until she finally spoke up.

"You're strong. But you're still…our idiot."

Jocabed's voice was soft but certain. "You're the reason we're all alive. Right?"

None of it reached him.

It wasn't Don's fault—he couldn't control it anymore. The gem had taken everything. Even if he wanted to come back, Scourge Don was all that was left.

So he walked away, his voice a hollow echo.

"No."

At King Dreadixz's Castle (Prison Room)

Everyone sat slumped against the cold stone walls, behind massive bars of solid rock.

Two guards in black armor watched them with bored expressions.

Foreshade was always dark, day or night, and nobody knew why.

Olsen stared at the guards, eyes vacant.

One of the guards turned, annoyed. "What's with the staring?"

Olsen shrugged. "We've got nothing else to look at. Might as well."

The guard jabbed his spear toward him. "Keep it up, and you'll find out what happens to your face."

Olsen clamped his mouth shut.

Minutes passed in silence.

Then Dreadixz walked up in his human form, his gaze sharp.

"Alright, you two. Break time. Go."

The guards left without a word.

As soon as the door slammed, Prince broke the quiet.

"Baby Shark! Do doo do doo do doo! Baby Shark—"

"CAN WE NOT?!" Demaurion barked, veins bulging in his forehead.

Prince sighed. "Fine. Just trying to break the boredom."

Olsen tapped him on the shoulder, pointing past the bars.

Prince raised an eyebrow. "What?"

"Look."

Everyone turned.

There, in a dusty alcove, was a preserved marble statue—of Queen Stellar's rear end.

They all stared, faces slack with awe.

Archie cleared his throat, adopting the tone of a posh nobleman.

"Magnificent. Truly."

Prince nodded solemnly. "The Lunaranites have impeccable taste."

Olsen wiped a fake tear. "Don's so lucky to be the next King of the Celestianites."

Ella slapped her palm over her face. "Can you all stop being weird and focus on escaping?"

"Nah. I'm not missing out on premium booty," Olsen said, deadpan.

Ella looked ready to scream, but then she spotted something glinting on the floor—a Power Gem, just out of reach beyond the cage.

"Guys, LOOK!"

Nobody reacted.

She smacked Prince in the back of the head.

He flinched, then followed her pointing finger.

"THERE'S A POWER GEM!" he whispered loudly.

Everyone's eyes snapped to it.

Prince glanced at Demaurion and grinned. "Are you thinking what I'm thinking?"

They all nodded slowly.

Archie raised a hand. "While we're planning our daring escape…can we bring the statue?"

CH.23 Free Will

A thunderstorm happened. Rain started spurting from the sky as Don stood face to face against his friends. Mason called once again, "COME BACK, MAN! IT'S REALLY NOT THAT HARD!"

"I CAN'T!" Don shot back. "MAYBE IF I HAD THE FREE WILL TO, I'D ALREADY BE WITH YOU GUYS!"

"But what's the point? You think after reliving past moments that scarred me for life is going to make me call you my 'friends'? I don't think so…"

Everyone raised their eyebrows and started to look at each other. William looked at me, confused. "What do you mean by 'free will'?"

Ryan marched right in front of everybody, his gears shifting right on his shoulders. "Look, man, I don't wanna do this, but we're gonna have to use force."

Scourge Don clenched his claw-like gloves. "Oh, so you're now accepting violence?" He walked towards them, celestial energy crackling and darkening. "You're making a huge mistake…"

Ryan marched towards him, and the others tried to hold him back, but it didn't work. Then, he charged towards Don at swift speeds, leaped into the air to strike his face. But as he leaped, Don caught him, his claws piercing through Ryan's chest.

Blood rapidly gushed out of the body. Then, Don, with no hesitation, hurled him down to the ground.

Ryan was on the ground, groaning and clutching his chest as he felt the pain surge through his body. The others looked at Don in horror, then they looked back at Ryan.

Sophia raised her eyebrow. "You just killed that guy with no hesitation?"

Everyone charged up their Elements, waiting for the battle to begin. The rain landed on the ground and on Don's suit, making it more soaking wet than it was before. He gritted his teeth as he adjusted his mask and stared into the crew's souls.

"Oh this is gonna be beautiful." Everyone charged at him with full power, and Don charged back, running toward them with celestial energy surging through his body. William launched himself into the air with wind, then dove back down toward Don at maximum velocity. Don launched himself into the air with celestial energy, and when the two collided, he celestial-struck William's gut, sending him shooting down like a meteor.

As Don descended back to the ground, Sophia was already firing musical notes at him. Don used his wings to move to the side and dodge, then charged up his entire body with celestial energy and stared into Sophia's eyes. As the energy surrounded him like flames, he shouted, "RAPID DASH!" He blitzed toward Sophia at light speed like a shooting star, striking her gut as hard as he could.

He landed on the ground while sliding, then the others started running toward him. Javier threw a punch, but Don moved to the side, ducked under his fists, and uppercutted his chin.

Hail shards started falling from the sky like rain as Anhia fired, and Don looked up at them. He glanced to the left and saw Mason rolling toward him like a spiky doughnut. Teleporting above Anhia, Don kicked her down, then instantly teleported behind Mason to celestial punch him away. He flash-kicked Daysni, comboed Lonnie with two punches and an aerial kick, then grabbed Emely's head and slammed her down onto his knee before backhanding Jocabed away like a side character.

Emely slammed her Ice Trident onto the ground, creating an entire field of ice. Don jumped in time as the event happened, then used his celestial chains to wrap Emely up. He landed back on the ground with her restrained when Jocabed ran toward him with snowflake shurikens in her hands, yelling, "LET HER GO!" She fired the shurikens, but they melted as they touched Don. Jocabed's arms froze, then she fired five straight beams

of snow and ice. Don chucked Emely straight into the beams, freezing her instead of himself.

Lonnie Mae tried restraining him with vines, but Don flash-kicked her high into the air. Drake fired mud blasts at Don, but Don moved to the side like he was dancing. Then, teleporting behind Drake, he swept his feet out from under him, sending him airborne.

"SAVAGE SWEEP!" Don spun around and struck him in the chest, launching him backward.

"Hmph, is that all you got?" Don scoffed.

Keyler fired a spider string at Don, but Don managed to dodge and fired a celestial chain at him instead. The chain wrapped around Keyler, and Don swung him into Kwa'asja, slamming them both down.

Looking up, Don saw Angel falling out of a portal. He teleported into the air and delivered a celestial punch, launching Angel into the sky. Don teleported back to the ground as bodies fell around him. He looked around slowly—he knew he wasn't done yet. There were still more to take down.

He teleported right in front of Drake, struck him into the air, and held him in place. Then, he rapidly unleashed a flurry of celestial punches, keeping him airborne. Charging up his fists, he delivered a final celestial punch that sent Drake tumbling backward through the ground.

Don moved to the side and then blasted into the air. He charged up his fists, aiming at everyone beneath him. His fists lit up in celestial flames, and he hurled them downward as ten gigantic fists fell from the sky like meteors. They smashed into the ground, shattering the air like glass, creating a widespread celestial explosion that destroyed several mountains and scattered debris.

Scourge Don landed as smoke slowly erupted from the ground. He glanced at everyone before spotting Fedjina, who was still standing, her falcon wings wilting. She was bleeding, holding onto her arm—an opening. Don took out a celestial chain and stabbed her. She collapsed as blood spilled.

Don looked around for Krane and Overbrawl, but they were nowhere to be seen.

Then, out of nowhere, someone flame-punched his face, sending Don spiraling and tumbling back across the ground. He stopped, lying on his chest. Slowly, he looked up and saw Krane standing there, his right arm ignited in flames.

"Bye-bye," Krane sneered, waving his hand.

He clenched his right arm, and the watch on his wrist released a small purple orb. It surged and crackled, making sounds of thunder and lightning as the rain poured.

Don wasted no time and dashed toward the orb, which soon grew into a massive spherical plasma ball in the air. Harsh winds swept across the Rufty Mountains as the sphere expanded, growing to the size of the moon itself.

Don stood still, staring up at the colossal spiritual orb. It towered above him, radiating a bright, ethereal light.

Flashbacks hit him the moment he looked at the purple hole. He whispered to himself, "I… I've witnessed this before…"

Memories from the beginning resurfaced—the moment he was pulled into the black hole by Dark Don, isolating him from his classmates.

Then, in an instant, Don and the orb vanished.

Krane smirked, turning away as he adjusted his watch. He glanced at everyone on the ground, acting like they were dead—but they weren't.

Still, he shook his head and grumbled.

Don still had the Pink Power Gem.

Overbrawl trudged toward Krane and sighed weakly. "So, what do we do now?"

Krane clenched his fists, his violet eyes staring into the flat depths of the Rufty Mountains.

"Scarletsville. Now."

"Archie, you think you can get that?" Olsen asked while pointing at the Power Gem right in front of them. Archie ignited his hands in flickering flames and grabbed the prison bars in front of him. The bars slowly started

to melt, and after a while, they finally melted completely.

Everyone turned to look at Archie—then they exploded. "YOU COULD'VE DONE THAT THE ENTIRE TIME?!" Demaurion roared. Archie shrugged. "Eh, I just wanted to look at the statue for a few more minutes." The boys turned to look at the statue, then back at Archie.

"Hmph, sounds reasonable enough." "Great excuse." "I'd do the same thing." "He has a point." Ella just looked at them like they were weirdos. "WE'RE TRYING TO ESCAPE HERE! NOT LOOK AT SOME SORT OF STATUE OF QUEEN STELLAR'S REAR E—nevermind…"

Everyone slowly walked out of the prison room with the silver Power Gem, and now they were free. They looked around the dark and eerie place to see if anyone was there.

Luckily, there was nobody. The place was dimly lit, cobwebs covered the ceilings, and dust drifted through the air. The sounds of prisoners yawning, some screaming in pain, and others crying filled the atmosphere. Ella led the group as they followed her straight toward the black exit door. Archie also took the statue with him before following.

They moved through the door, sprinting silently, then stopped after a few minutes. Olsen slowly pressed himself against the wall while Prince peeked out of the exit door. He scanned the area, noticing that they were upstairs in the Storage Room. Prince peered over the edge, looking down at the ground. He saw two Lunaranite guards in dragon form, holding their spears. Prince smirked. "Oh, this is gonna be easy…"

The others turned in Prince's direction, taking a peek before slowly stepping out. Just as Prince was about to snipe an electric spark at one of the guards, Ella grabbed his arm and told him to stop. One of the guards started speaking, and the crew listened carefully. "Alright, go release Duke," one of the guards said, pointing his spear at the other. "He's gonna be released for now because he's going to have a meeting with the king." Everyone started panicking silently, but Ella calmed them down—she had an idea.

As the guard walked up the stairs toward the prison room, the four clung to the ceiling, holding on so they wouldn't fall. The guard passed beneath

them, entering the prison halls. Everyone sighed in relief, then quietly dropped to the ground.

Prince peered back down the stairs, and the other guard was gone. The four rushed downstairs, finding themselves standing on a red carpet with golden patterns. The walls were black and purple, and the lights were dim.

Barrels were stacked in the corners, and an arched entrance stood a few feet ahead of them. This led to a wide room with a stone battlefield in the center. Red banners hung from the walls, and a large throne sat to the right, connected by a circular bridge with many chairs around it. "That must be the Battle Room," Olsen whispered as he glanced through the entrance.

They quietly sprinted inside, making sure nobody was in sight. Taking out their weapons just in case, they began exploring.

Archie turned to the battlefield and eagerly ran toward it. He held the statue tight as he gazed at the floor, as if studying it. He whispered in awe, "This is amazing!"

"Archie! We're trying to get out of here, not scan the floor!" Ella murmured. Archie smirked as he put the statue down and looked around again. "It just looks so cool!" The castle suddenly started shaking violently, as dust erupted from the roof.

Everyone slowly looked up and began backing away. Cracks formed above them—directly over Archie. The rocks were about to collapse, and Archie stood right on the battlefield, unaware.

Olsen dashed toward Archie, yelling, "ARCHIE, GET DOWN!" "Why should I?!" Archie whined. Olsen shouted as loud as he could, probably loud enough for the other Lunaranites to hear him.

"JUST GET DOWN—" Jagged rocks shot out from the ceiling, plummeting straight toward Archie's head. Olsen wasted no time. He leaped into the air like a superhero, his dark green ignited fists glowing as he cried out, "SPIKY GROUND!"

He hurled his fists at the falling debris, and large, jagged rocks shot up from the ground, completely shattering them into fragments. Landing right behind Archie, he huffed, "Next time, don't do anything stupid. How

about that for once?" "Oh, come on, the battlefield looked cool," Archie said in a carefree voice.

"Oh, survived? You kids are very lucky…" A deep, cold, sorrowful voice echoed from behind Archie and Olsen. Everyone froze for a second, then slowly turned to face the figure. He wore a mostly black and green-painted metallic suit, with a triangular emblem glowing green on his chest.

His armored legs were cybernetic, made of steel, patterned in black and neon green. A ripped black cape swayed behind him, tied to his neck. His eyes glowed an eerie green beneath a metallic helmet shaped like a bird's head, the beak also glowing neon green. The entire helmet concealed his mouth and face, except for his piercing eyes. He wore black gloves with glowing neon green lights. His fingers were sharp, and through his chest, a black heart with green outlines was visible, pulsing like a glowing shadow. Demaurion asked, his voice filled with suspicion and caution, "Who… are you?"

CH.24 Duke's Arrival

The Lunaranite soldiers closed in, forming a tight circle around Duke.

- ***Duke*** *— Neon Elemental Fallen Celestianite*
- *Not promising but loves to throw down*

Olsen and Archie scanned the room, panic rising as an eerie energy crawled up their spines. The situation was dire—Duke was cornered, flanked by soldiers, while the others faced Dreadixz's looming threat.

Duke's fists clenched tight, his jaw a hard line. "Why won't you leave me *alone*?!" he growled. Suddenly, fiery neon-green energy exploded from him, unleashing a shockwave that sent several Lunaranites spiraling through the air like ragdolls.

Dark green and black flames flickered around his hands, a neon glow flaring in one eye. His neon heart throbbed visibly beneath his armor, pulsing faster as the soldiers shifted back into their human forms, spears poised and ready. Energy surged through Duke's body, flames licking up his arms.

"Come on!" he roared, fists blazing as he faced the attackers.

The Lunaranites charged with lethal precision, but Duke was faster. His fist slammed into one's gut; a spinning uppercut sent another skyward. Two lunged simultaneously—he leapt, unleashing a whirlwind kick that struck both with brutal force. Landing lightly, he blinked forward, flash-

kicking an enemy into the air.

They kept coming. Duke's movements blurred into streaks of neon light as he darted through foes like a blazing comet. Backhands cracked faces, legs swept enemies off their feet, and fists pummeled ribs with relentless fury. He launched one into the air with a gut punch, blasted another's chin, and delivered a flurry of punches that hit faster than a speeding bullet.

He dodged, ducked, spun—and drop-kicked an enemy hard enough to send them crashing into a wall. Then, gathering energy, he unleashed neon blasts in every direction, each explosion echoing through the chamber. He landed, knees driving into one foe's chest before kneeing another mid-attack. His spin kick cut through the air, sending an enemy sprawling.

The pile of Lunaranites grew—until Duke's neon aura burst into a tempest. He teleported through the crowd, fists and feet a blur, slamming heads together and sending enemies flying. Grabbing one by the leg, he spun them into the others like a human wrecking ball before unleashing a barrage of rapid-fire punches that sent his target rocketing skyward.

His eyes gleamed with ruthless focus as he right-hooked another into the ground. He hurled an enemy up, chasing with a neon-charged storm of energy blasts. Explosions shook the castle, walls cracking under the assault.

With a final burst, Duke slammed his fists into the ground, triggering a cataclysmic shockwave that obliterated the room in a brilliant white blaze. The light was blinding, swallowing the battlefield whole.

When the dust settled, Olsen groaned, battered but alive. One by one, the others rose, their eyes locking on Duke amidst the fallen Lunaranites, many pierced by spears or shattered against the stone.

Eli's glare was sharp. *He's an enemy for sure.*

Archie's fists flickered with flames. "We can't trust him. If the Lunaranites see him as a threat, there's gotta be a reason."

Ella nodded. "No beast traits either. That's suspicious."

Archie adjusted his phoenix helmet, ready to strike. But before he could move, Duke blinked in front of him and slammed a devastating punch into his gut, triggering an explosion that hurled Archie crashing through the

throne.

Shock rippled through the group as the battle erupted.

Ella lunged with daggers, but Duke caught them and sent a brutal left hook that sent her tumbling. Olsen charged, swinging his hammer, but Duke weaved effortlessly. Prince struck from behind—then Duke vanished into thin air.

Prince's punch accidentally connected with Olsen, triggering a massive electrical blast that shattered walls and sent him flying. Duke reappeared behind Prince, grabbing his wings and hurling him through the ceiling.

Archie launched explosive fireballs, but Duke slipped through their attacks like smoke, teleporting, kicking, punching—a relentless neon tempest. He blasted Archie with a brutal aerial kick, then grabbed his wings and slammed him down with earth-shattering force.

Archie staggered but fired his most powerful explosion yet, engulfing the chamber in flames and debris. Yet Duke was already aloft, a glowing neon sphere forming in his hand. With a mocking spin, he hurled the sphere toward Archie and Eli. It detonated in a blinding blast that ripped through the room like a scythe, sending splinters and shards flying.

Emerging through the light like a shadow, Duke screamed victory and struck Archie with a devastating punch, sending him tumbling through walls.

He stood over the wreckage, neon flames licking his arms. "The name's Duke."

As Duke prepared to ascend, Olsen's voice cracked through the smoke. "Wait!"

Bloodied and weary, Olsen staggered forward, holding a silver Power Gem. Duke's fists flared with energy, eyes narrowing.

"Why waste my time?" Duke sneered. "I've got bigger things to do than play with you kids all day."

Olsen's defiant grin held steady. "Not today."

Before Duke could react, Olsen tackled him midair. They crashed through the Battle Room walls, soaring over a thousand feet before descending. Olsen pounded Duke's face with rapid punches; Duke fought

back with fierce kicks.

Jets ignited on Duke's back, wings unfurling, thrusters roaring to life. They spiraled through the sky, green energy trailing behind.

They crashed into a tower, debris scattering as Duke fired green energy bullets. Olsen dodged and transformed his hand into a rocky hammer, smashing into Duke's leg.

Duke twirled and dove, the wind howling as they plummeted toward the jagged valley below. They rolled hard on impact, sparks flying as Olsen swung his hammer relentlessly, scratching Duke's helmet and armor.

Duke staggered, but countered with a sword formed from his arm. The slash sent Olsen sprawling. Duke's armor began morphing, becoming more menacing—rockets ignited on his legs, cybernetic wings expanding.

"Missiles—NOW!" he commanded.

Ten missiles spiraled toward Olsen, who smashed each apart with his hammer, leaping like a hero ready to strike. Duke grabbed Olsen midair and slammed him into a tree, snapping it in two.

Pain seared through Olsen's body, but he pushed up, hammer raised. Duke backhanded him hard, sending him crashing through rock. Missiles erupted, shaking the ground with violent explosions.

Olsen lay bloodied, the silver Intelligence Gem slipping from his pocket, glowing softly on the ground.

Duke gripped Olsen's neck, eyes blazing neon green. "What Earthnite could do this damage? This one."

He crushed Olsen briefly, then released him, dropping him to the floor.

"I'll be gone for now," Duke sneered, but the distant roar of incoming missiles cut him off.

Looking up, Duke's smirk faded. Fiery missiles hurtled down, detonating in massive explosions that sent Olsen flying and tore through the forest. From the sky, Prince, Archie, Ella, and Eli descended in their beast forms, roaring their challenge.

"Company's here," Duke growled, summoning twelve missiles from his back.

The battlefield exploded again as Duke fought the relentless onslaught.

Blasts sent foes flying, trees splintering under the fury.

The fight raged on—flames, explosions, and shattered stone marking every strike.

Finally, amid the chaos, Demaurion appeared, a deep blue Leviathan dragon, biting Duke's cannon and snapping it in half. Sparks flew, Duke cursed and backhanded Demaurion, who tumbled but held fast.

Ella gasped, "He took the Power Gem!"

Olsen gazed into the dark clouds. "I know the Power Gems…"

Meanwhile, Don stirred in a dark cave, cold droplets echoing around him. Alone, lost, and shrouded in shadow, he shook his head, trying to make sense of where Krane had sent him.

Cobwebs brushed his face; insects skittered in the gloom. No exit was visible—just the silence of night and his own thoughts.

His mind was a storm—memories of what he'd done swirling with a gnawing doubt. The Scourge Don inside him pushed forward, but a voice within whispered of lost free will, of a fractured soul trapped behind the rage.

He clutched the Passion and Incarceration Gems, knowing the path ahead demanded he collect them all to claim Celestia.

Power—he thought—was the prize. But was power worth the cost?

Conflicted and haunted, Don wrestled with his fading self, tears burning behind his eyes. He wanted to come back. To forgive. To be a hero.

But the Scourge had stolen that choice.

His heart shattered quietly as his old self dissolved like dust in a desert storm.

Then, a gentle voice broke through the darkness.

"Do you need help?"

CH.25 Trials and Tribulations

The two walked through Scarletzville like a pair of corporate mercs on a lunch break—calm, casual, and totally out of place in a volcanic warzone. The crimson skies loomed over them, smoke trailing like ink in water, and the molten rivers bubbled just beneath their rocky path. Still, they pressed forward, scanning the terrain with sharp eyes.

Overbrawl finally broke the silence. "So, Krane, what do you even do with the money Dreadixz gives you after a mission? I mean, I'm in it for the stacks, plain and simple. What about you?"

Krane exhaled sharply and turned his gaze away. "I don't wanna talk about it," he muttered.

Overbrawl tilted his head, eyes narrowing. "C'mon, it's a basic question. What's the money for?"

Krane clenched his fists. "Because I want to be king. Not Dreadixz. Not anyone else."

Overbrawl froze. "Wait… you wanna dethrone Dreadixz?"

Krane scoffed. "Not just him. All of them. Every ruler in Avangard. They're just gears in a broken cycle."

Violet flames flickered in Krane's eyes. "I'm no one's dog. Dreadixz wants the Power Gems split and scattered. But me? I'm not playing that game. Holding those things messes with my Element. Too long, and I'm toast. Only safe spot is sacred pillars. Anywhere else, they decay… or worse, they call attention."

Overbrawl nodded slowly. "So it ain't just paranoia…"

"Nah. It's chess. And I'm not handing Incarceration the win on a silver plate."

Overbrawl chuckled. "You're playin' your own game under Dreadixz's nose. I respect that."

Krane smirked. "I'm not surviving this war by playing nice."

Their trek took them to a jagged red canyon split by rivers of lava. Krane's watch suddenly beeped, flashing orange.

"We're close," he muttered.

Behind a sharp, diagonally twisted rock, they found it: a glowing orange Power Gem radiating wild, aggressive energy—the Fury Gem.

"Bingo," Krane whispered, eyes locked on the hexagon-shaped artifact. He snatched it in one smooth motion, examining it before glancing at Overbrawl.

"Looks fierce," Overbrawl muttered.

Suddenly, jets roared overhead. The two snapped to attention. Krane braced his watch while Overbrawl powered up with explosive energy.

"ALRIGHT, WHOEVER YOU ARE, COME OUT AND CATCH THESE HANDS!" Overbrawl roared.

The sound fractured the smoky sky. Thrusters blared, and a neon green comet cut through the clouds.

"What the heck is that?" Krane narrowed his eyes.

Overbrawl instinctively grabbed the Fury Gem. As the glowing figure approached, Krane recognized the jet-propelled blur.

Duke. In his Jetfire State.

Before anyone could blink, Krane launched. They collided mid-air with a shockwave so massive it vaporized entire ridges.

Duke countered, grabbed Krane's leg, and hurled him like a ragdoll. Krane ricocheted through stone and lava like a tossed coin.

Overbrawl lunged next, but Duke danced around his punch, responding with a savage combo: right hook, left hook, knee to the gut, elbow to the chin, and a spinning backhand that sent Overbrawl flying like a meteor.

Krane returned in a blink, only to eat a blinding flash punch straight to the face. The explosion lit up Scarletzville.

"No flashy entrance?" Krane sneered. Duke said nothing, his heart now visibly pulsing neon through his chest.

They clashed again, fists colliding in raw elemental fury. Krane ducked under a kick and countered with a spiritual strike to Duke's chest, launching him upward.

Overbrawl appeared above and hammered Duke downward, creating an explosion that cratered half a valley.

Duke rebounded mid-air and tackled Krane, sending both plummeting into the molten earth. They brawled in the blazing core, flinging blasts and breaking rock.

Duke dodged, then launched back, grabbing Krane mid-air. They rocketed upward, trading rapid-fire punches, soaring back into the sky.

Krane comboed with a punch, sidekick, and an axe kick that dropped Duke like a star.

Overbrawl struck again, but Duke teleported and launched a blinding combo from behind, sending Overbrawl spiraling.

Neon energy erupted from Duke as he threw Overbrawl like a ragdoll. Then Krane came barreling in, glowing like a comet.

Missiles screamed from Duke's arms, but Krane weaved through them, retaliating with a barrage of spiritual blasts. Duke countered with a neon flare.

They clashed in the sky, fists blurring, the fight becoming a hurricane of blows. Krane landed a gut punch that made Duke cough blood and crater the earth.

Krane followed to finish it—but Duke vanished, teleporting away.

Krane appeared everywhere at once, like echoes of himself, fists flying. Duke sidestepped each one, then flipped behind him.

"NEON INSANITY!"

A wild aerial kick bent the air itself, and Krane was blasted away, spinning like a cannonball through an entire mountain—slamming Overbrawl in the process.

BOOM. The land erupted. Lava spewed. Layers of earth peeled upward.

Silence. Then dust settled.

Krane and Overbrawl were down, tangled like discarded laundry. Duke stood tall, heart glowing, the only one unbroken.

His heart throbbed faster—he was charging more energy.

Two Zeniths. Bloodied. For the first time in Avangard history.

Duke approached and took the Fury Gem from Overbrawl's hand. He grinned.

"You two did great. Thanks for collecting these for me. Consider it… tribute."

His jets shrank back into a pack, and he dropped into base form. "Two down. Seven to go."

Krane stirred, twitching. He activated his watch.

"Wait…"

The device turned red, glowing with unstable spiritual and fiery energy.

Duke raised an eyebrow. "What are you gonna do? Hit me with your puppy wa—"

BOOOOOM!!

A devious, cataclysmic blast engulfed Scarletzville. The air buckled. Lava erupted. Ground shook like jelly.

When the smoke cleared, Krane lay gasping, on the edge of consciousness.

And then… footsteps. From the flames emerged Duke.

Untouched.

Krane's cracked eyes widened. "No… way…"

Duke's eyes glowed neon green, his heart still pulsing visibly. He had lost his arm cannon thanks to Demaurion, but from his other arm, a black sword shimmered to life, glowing with green.

"Weaklings," Duke snarled. "You really thought that would stop me?"

Everyone slowly came to, groaning under the weight of the fight they'd just survived. Scourge Don had left them shattered. The sky above was a blanket of stars, untouched by clouds or rain, the silver-white moon watching in silence. The battlefield was still—quiet, except for the occasional pained breath or shuffle.

Lonnie Mae used her vines to heal the group, wrapping them just tightly enough to stabilize wounds. It worked, mostly. Cuts remained, bruises still colored their skin, but the pain had dulled. Emely sat down with a tired exhale.

"Great. He's really gone."

Kai peeked out from behind a rock—he'd been knocked out early and missed most of the fight. Javier scanned the area with tired eyes, then paused.

"Wait… Didn't anyone else see Overbrawl? And that other Zenith—the one with the watch?"

Mason nodded. "Yeah. They were here… and then they vanished with Don."

Lonnie Mae and Anhia helped Ryan to his feet. His chest was still aching, but he was alive. Barely. If Don's strike had landed just inches closer to his heart, he wouldn't be.

Kayson's phone buzzed. He pulled it from his pocket—cracked and scorched—and blinked at the screen.

"Olsen's calling. He said he was bringing some rocks or something—"

Jocabed grabbed the phone and answered before he could finish. The screen lit up with Olsen's face, flanked by Prince, Demaurion, Archie, Eli, and Ella.

"You guys okay?! What happened?!" Olsen's voice cracked through the speaker.

Kwa'asja stepped in. "We tried to bring Don back. Again. But he attacked us—he almost killed Ryan."

"And Overbrawl wasn't alone," Lonnie Mae added. "There was another Zenith. They vanished with Don."

Olsen paused, then rubbed his head. "Wait… who was the other Zenith?"

Javier leaned in. "He was purple. Wore a watch. Controlled fire and spiritual energy at the same time."

"That's the one who captured us!" Olsen exclaimed.

"You guys got captured?!" Emely hovered over the phone in shock.

"And imprisoned," Archie added, dead serious.

"We're calling to warn you," Olsen continued. "There's someone else—his name's Duke. He's hunting Power Gems. After our fight, he didn't finish me. He just took the Gem and left."

Everyone exchanged uneasy glances.

"Don had Power Gems too," Jocabed said. "One pink. One black."

Olsen's voice sharpened. "Then it's real. He's going after all of them. And if he collects them… it could be catastrophic. We have to get them to Celestia. Seal them away before any of these maniacs—Incarceration, Dreadixz, Overbrawl, Duke, that unknown Zenith, Dark Don, even Scourge Don—gets their hands on them."

He hung up.

"That's another crisis added to the list," Keyler muttered, checking off a spider-thread notebook.

Jocabed stared at the ground. "Don said something about free will."

"Incarceration manipulated him," Sophia added. "Maybe… he didn't choose this. Maybe he was forced."

"You're right," said a voice—low and familiar.

Everyone turned. From the shadows, a figure emerged. Silver scales shimmered faintly beneath the moonlight.

It was Dark Don.

His suit was cracked and caked with dried mud. His dragon mask bore the shape of Scourge Don's, but something about his stance was different—less threatening. More… human.

"How are you alive?!" Mason shouted, arms stretching with tension.

Weapons ignited. Energy crackled.

"Relax," Dark Don said calmly, raising his hands. "I'm not here to fight. I'm here to talk."

Everyone looked at each other—hesitant. But they lowered their

weapons.

Dark Don nodded toward Jocabed. "She's right. He didn't turn on you willingly."

He stepped closer.

"I followed him into the Grolian Forest. Planned to end this myself. But I found him… tied in vines, his hero suit torn to shreds. He was holding a Power Gem."

He looked up at the moon.

"It was the Incarceration Gem. One of the darkest. It doesn't just corrupt—it changes you. Turns you into a violent version of yourself. And if you don't know how to come back… you don't."

Keyler stepped forward. "Then why did he call us 'friends'? He said it weird. Like he didn't mean it."

Dark Don looked away, then back.

"He did mean it. He just didn't know *what* it meant anymore."

He paused, as if weighing whether to keep going.

"When I was… inside his mind, I saw what Incarceration did to him. He showed him nightmares. Nightmares of *you.*"

Gasps.

Emely fainted on the spot.

Lonnie Mae's voice shook. "W-what did we do?"

Dark Don closed his eyes. When he opened them, he was still calm—but clearly holding something back.

"You laughed. You laughed when he messed up. When he got nervous. When he felt small. You thought it was just your personalities. He thought it was love."

Silence.

"He tried to ignore it. Built a bond with you in sixth grade. A real one. But when those memories came back… they tore him up. He started questioning everything. Were you ever real friends? Or was he just your joke?"

He turned his back to them, then glanced over his shoulder.

"All he ever wanted was to fit in. To be seen. Instead, he got labeled,

teased, mocked. And the worst part? He *still* loves you. Every single one of you."

Dark Don paused.

"He's not perfect. He gets confused. He gets embarrassed. He can't be everything you expect him to be. But none of that should've made him feel disposable. He cared. That's what made him different."

He stepped away, his voice like distant thunder.

"If you gain someone… don't throw them away. Or one day, they might not come back."

Sophia spoke softly. "He didn't turn on us. He just… doesn't believe we're on his side anymore."

Mason crossed his arms. Eyes narrowed. "Then how do we fix it?"

Dark Don turned slowly and walked into the dark.

"Follow me."

CH.26 Metaphors

The group walked through the Rufty Mountains under the night sky. Rocks jagged protrude from the ground, and large mountains that towered them were standing side by side from each other, some scattered.

Crickets were heard in the night, while birds flew through the sky above the clouds. The walk was slow and silent, Dark Don led the group. Nobody was talking after the last discussion, until someone decided to speak up.

"So, who's the purple Zenith? Olsen warned us about him, and we barely got any information. Also, who's Duke?" Daysni asked. Dark Don turned to her, "You mean Krane? See, Krane is a former Zenith.

He got obsessed with power just like Incarceration, so he went into his own path… That watch he wears allows him to maximize or combine his spiritual and thermal energy." "And Duke, I don't wanna talk about Duke…. His story is too much."

Lonnie Mae got curious, "You sure? What happened to him?" Dark Don sighed, "You really want to know about the Story of Duke?" He coughed a little, and then he looked down once. "Look, if this is gonna be disturbing I'm covering my ears," Jaiver said as he covered his ears. Dark Don rolled his eyes, "Alright, you guys asked for it." "So when Duke was a little boy, only about the age of 10, he had lovable parents. Parents that he'd never trade for, he loved him, and his parent's loved him back. He was a kid with no race, which means he had a condition called "Avangardios". A condition where an Avangard citizen does not have a race, but is in a tribe. He was in the Celestianite tribe, but he wasn't any race. Many people had

mistaken him as a Lunaranite because of his Neon Element. Everything was going so well for him, but things took a change when the CL War continued… Lunaranites raided his family's home at the age of 12, and then they killed his parents in the most violent way possible. When Duke heard the news, he rushed to the Iris Town hospital to go see his parents. But he was too late, they were dead. He cried, and cried, and cried, and cried. He cried until he lost all of his tears, and after realizing that the Lunaranites killed his entire family, he cried some more. They killed all of his siblings, his aunts, his uncles, his cousins, his grandparents, the Lunaranites killed every single one of them. They even killed all of his best friends, in the most brutal ways too. He watched all of them die, and then he was to the point where he tried to kill himself. He stabbed himself into the heart, three times in a row with a sharp dagger. But instead, the Regeneration Z. healed his heart. He made sure he helped Duke with all of his problems, but Duke was too sad and too angry to even need help. All of that anger went into his heart, and then his heart started to become visible from the chest. It was completely black, and it glowed a dark neon green around the heart. The heart was neon energy storage for his Element, but if it beats too fast and it glows, he uses too much energy which can drain him. The pain lingered him so much that he thought, 'Why must I suffer this, I shall take revenge…' And so he did. He killed every Luanranite he saw on sight, and he never trusted any other tribes ever since, even his own tribe. He hated the wars, he wanted them to stop. But he couldn't change the world himself could he? Nobody knows why he's searching for the Power Gems, but it might be for a good or dangerous cause…"

Silence erupted, nobody said a word. The only thing that was heard was the wind howling, but nothing else. The story itself was so emotional.

It was powerful, coming from Dark Don. But after Dark Don told the story, he thought to himself.

"Am I like Duke?" He thought about it a few times, and then he shook his head to ignore it.The crew walked along the flatlands of the Rufty Mountains, and then they finally entered the end of the Grolian Forest. Large green trees that were wet and were completely surrounded by large

fern bushes and leaves were sitting right in front of them. It looked like a whole jungle because of the amount of trees foresting the area.

But there was a large mossy cave in the middle of the exit, and it was hidden by the leaves and gigantic ferns. Dark Don walked in, his cybernetic shoes squelching the mud. "What are you doing?" Mason asked as he watched Dark Don. Dark Don sliced through the leaves and ferns with his other arm that was made out of lunar energy.

As he cut through them, a massive cave appeared right in front of them. There were lights in the cave that emerged from it, and then Dark Don turned to the group, cocking his head towards the entrance of the cave. "Welcome to the Forgotten Wizard's Domain…" It was Starla. The Celestianite Dragon princess with her protector Scorch. In the dim lit cave, Scourge Don just stood there, staring at them both.

He hissed, and then Starla walked towards him, unfazed. Scorch went with her, hissing back at Don. "You're the guy that I met back at the Rufty Mountains! Why are you here now? Why are you even dirtier than before?" Starla said, looking around Don's body filled with curiosity.

"BACK AWAY!" Don in his Scourge State shouted. Starla scoffed, "Oh, well you've got some attitude." "I don't need your help, nor anyone's help. I'll just go if you leave me be," Scourge Don walked away. Starla grabbed his tail, lifting him up.

"Not like that you are! I mean look at you! You're so ugly!" "PUT ME DOWN YOU DOLTED CELESTIANITE!" Scourge Don cried once again. He tried moving around, but then Starla gently placed him down. Don got up and he backed away, "Now I have other things to do than spending time messing around with you!" Starla grabbed Don in her talons once again, "Nope, you're going to take a bath, and we're gonna talk about this! This isn't how the Chosen One of the prophecy is going to be!"

Don groaned as Scorch followed Starla from behind.

They walked out of the cave, and then she threw Don down. Don felt a jolt of pain after being shot onto the ground, and then he got up, dusting off his dirty hero suit.

"Now let's get into someone's house and clean you up!" Starla exclaimed

excitedly. Don looked around the place, ignoring her.

There were large pink and red towers, with a slim castle in the middle. They were crowded against each other, and there were so many Blushinites flying in the air with their red, white, and pink wings in the air.

Hearts were fluttering in the sky, and sounds of laughter and giggles filled the air. The sky was in an orange and pink hue, acting like a blanket over the land. Scourge Don just stared at the place, and then the Don inside of him thought to himself. "Why me…" Scourge Don pushed him away from the mind, and he turned to Starla and Scorch. "Where do we go?" Starla grabbed Don with her talons, and she put him on her back.

Don sat, and Scorch stayed real close just in case Don tried to do anything. Starla spread her wings in the air, "Let's go!" They took off into the sky.

Starla flapped her wings, feeling the warm breeze touch her scales. She flew to the side with her wings spread, twirled. Scorch flew straight, and he stared at Don.

They went over the clouds, and then Don started to hear the sounds of the Blushinites singing with some Soundanites. Their ethereal voices were so captivating and beautiful, Starla admired them so much.

She and Scorch dove down to the entrance of a large pink painted tower, then they both landed on the ground. Hundreds of thousands of people were surrounding the area, some going to shops while some just stood around flirting with others.

The golden gates in front of them opened, and the booth of them walked into the tower. It was a deep bright pink hall with lots of golden pictures hanging from the walls to the sides. The long carpet was red and golden, and afar from them were two three doors.

One golden door in the middle, another golden door to the right, and one to the left.

There were fancy lights hanging from the roof, and they gleamed down at the trio. Scourge Don stayed quiet, trying to push the old Don away from him because of the emotions. Starla went through the first door in the middle, and they were in a bathroom with large golden banners on the sides.

The tub was white, filled with clean blue water from the Gadian Sea. As Don was just about to get off of Starla, Starla instantly threw him into the water. (SPLASH!) it went, now Don was completely soaked in his messy hero suit.

Don shot out of the water, and landed onto the ground, spreading water drops everywhere. Don tried to walk away but Starla quickly snatched him with her tail, "And where do you think you're going?" "I DO NOT WISH TO BE CLEANED THANK YOU VERY MUCH!" Scourge Don yelled once again.

Scorch threw in a splashful of clean water at Don, and then Starla slammed him into the tub once again. She smiled as Don emerged from the bubbles, compeltely straight faced. His face was still covered in the mask though.

"Alright, we gotta talk. I know the real Don isn't like this! But why are you though?" Starla asked, her blue eyes shimmering. Scourge Don scoffed, "Like I would tell you…" Starla puffed, "Nevermind, I know exactly what's going on anyway. I'm gonna need a little help though…" "OSCAR!!!" she called. A short male walked into the room, wearing a black shirt with pink stripes all over it. He wore gray pants, and his eyes were yellow.

He had the emo cut, but he wasn't emo at all. He also had the pink wings of a flamingo.

- **Oscar** — Love Elemental Blushinite
- *Obsessed with Starla, usually weird and flirty — loves to stir the pot.*

"I got the mirror princess!"

he said as he took out two rectangular shaped mirrors. Starla took the mirrors and she smiled, "Thank you so very much."

She turned to face Don, then she showed the mirrors to him. "Now, just look closely at the mirror… What is on them?" she asked. Don blinked, and then he shot a glare at her, but answered anyway.

"Me." Starla smiled, "Right, you are in both of the mirrors! But what happens if I take this hammer, and tap it a little to create a little crack?"

She did exactly that, and a crack formed on one of the mirrors.

"Do you see anything now?" Don shook his head, "I can still see myself, but not fully. There's a crack on the mirror which is why."

"Good," Starla said, her voice starting to get a bit more serious. "Now, that mirror is broken, meaning that somebody's gonna have to come fix it. So let's say a few builders come in to try and fix the mirror, but there's no other way to fix it, it's already broken. You can try, but it's still gonna be broken.

Since this mirror is broken, what do we do now?" "Replace it," Don answered once again. Starla continued to explain, "So you replace this mirror with a new mirror, and that mirror is alive and well. You can see your reflection on it, can you?" "What's the point of this?" Don said as he shot out of the bathtub, sending water flying everywhere. "You're just showing me mirrors! Why do I have to pay attention to this?!" Starla sighed, then she softly smiled at Don. "I saw everything. In the Grolian Forest. I heard everything Ella said to the crew about Incarceration's manipulation plan. The hammer was Incarceration, and the broken mirror is what you are now. Your friends try to come help you, but you're still broken. That's what the workers represent. But there's still the real Don inside of you, you can break free from Incarceration's Gem. His curse, his manipulation."

"I've been spying on Incarceration myself, I heard that he was going to use you to become the next Lunaranite King and use you as a weapon for war purposes, so then he can be the only one that rules Celestia…. Don, I know you're there… get out." Don stopped for a moment, and he slowly sunk into the water. The real Don was trying to push through, and then that was until Starla grabbed Don with her talons and crashed through the roof of the bathroom.

She placed Don on top of the steel pink roof, and the sun shone right in front of him. It was a bright orange while the sky was still orange and pink.

Cloud sheets were floating in the sky, while the orange sun took over the evening. Starla transformed into her human form, and Scorch stayed

in the bathroom. They were on the edge of the building, sitting together. "You can choose Don, but choose wisely," she said softly while looking at the sun.

The celestial energy in Don's purple eyes started to flicker from dark to bright, and they repeated the action again and again. He looked down, and then he peered at Starla. He got up, and then he looked down from the height.

He saw all of the Blushinites moving around, singing and dancing, flirting and loving each other. "Starla, I've got to go. I need to think about this…"

CH.27 Betrayal and Eldritch

The crew walked silently in the cave, scanning the mystical place. Dark Don led them as they moved through the cavern, until they stopped at a wooden door right in front of them. It was brown and had some splinters on it, but not too many. The door was wide, but small like any other. Dark Don slowly opened it with a slight creak, and then light emerged from the door. It was so bright that everyone covered their eyes to make sure they wouldn't go blind.

They quietly moved through the door, and what they saw was magnificent. It was a library filled with bookshelves from left to right. There were books in many shapes and sizes, and they were red, blue, pink, yellow, black, and even more colors. There were blue gates with swirling blue portal vortexes inside some of the bookshelves. They were in an arch shape, with golden outlines running along them. The ceiling had many cogs above, and there were brown rocky barbs hanging as well.

Between both bookshelves was one large table with many seats where everyone could sit. Lonnie Mae and Drake looked around the room in awe, checking out the different books on the shelves.

"This is AMAZING!" Lonnie Mae squealed in excitement.

Drake took out a book from the shelf that had a blue eye staring right back at him. "I gotta admit, this is really cool!"

Everyone started to explore the room in astonishment, and Dark Don stood there with his arms crossed, maintaining a serious expression. He thought to himself, *Am I really like Duke? He wants revenge against the Lunaranites and everyone because of his anger, and I want revenge against*

the Celestianites. I wanted revenge because the Celestianites were the reason why my creator died... but Duke had it worse. I should probably just focus on something else. I'll come back to that later, he thought.

Keyler was checking out a spider that had not only eight legs—but sixteen.

"I didn't know they had anything like this."

Sophia stared with him. "Double the legs, double the ugliness."

"The Forgotten Wizard should be here by now," Dark Don said as he looked down.

Then, someone emerged from the blue portals. It was a person wearing a blue robe and a crooked triangular hat. He had a large white beard and pale skin. He was clearly old, with wrinkles on his face, and he held a staff made out of wood with blue energy swirling around it. A glowing blue magical orb floated at the top of the staff, lighting up almost the entire room.

The old wizard wore busted brown shoes and small contacts. He was short and usually walked with his staff. He turned to face the group, and everyone turned to face him.

He waved his hand, greeting them with a raspy voice, "Hello, children," he coughed a little, "how are you kids today, hmm?"

He slowly walked toward Dark Don with his staff.

"You—why have you come to the Forgotten Wizard's Domain with everyone else?"

"Because we need your help," Dark Don answered blankly.

He got everyone's attention by snapping his fingers. "Everyone, meet Eldritch, the Forgotten Wizard. I've known him for a long time. He helps by creating potions and spells that can either heal people, strengthen them, or help with mental issues. He can do anything else too, by the way."

Kai hopped around near Eldritch, as if he were analyzing him. Then he hopped onto Eldritch's head and sniffed it. His long ears perked up, and then he started to lick his face.

Eldritch chuckled gruffly. "Looks like this Hric isn't a hostile one! Who's raisin' him?"

Everyone glanced at each other with uneasy looks. Sophia sighed, and then answered, "It was someone we lost… and we've got to get him back and away from Incarceration's influence! Please tell us how we can stop that."

Eldritch scratched his chin, then smiled with a chuckle. "I've got somethin' for ya."

He led the crew into the smaller library section, then started searching through a few shelves. He looked and looked until he found the right book. He took out a large, old green book and blew the dust off. He opened it, licked his fingers, and began flipping pages.

He placed the book on the table, and everybody watched him. He turned to the right page, and it read: *How to Make the Oligirath Potion.*

There were five instructions. Then, using his Magic Element, he magically summoned the ingredients. He needed two stacks of corn, one mouthful of Leviathan meat, two stacks of sugar, and lastly, water from the Gadian Sea.

He took a large metallic pot from underneath the table and placed it on top, pouring all the ingredients in. Then, he pulled out a large wooden spoon and began mixing them together. At first, it became a blue slimy mixture. As he stirred longer, the slime slowly turned more liquidy.

When he was done, he scooped a spoonful of the potion, grabbed a glass jar, and poured it in. The liquid rushed into the spherical jar, filling it from bottom to top. It glowed blue and pulsed with energy.

He shut the jar and handed it to Sophia. He said wisely,

"Use this to help your little friend… and after that, help him fulfill that prophecy of his."

Incarceration entered the throne room in the castle of Foreshade. He walked on the rug, and silence filled the atmosphere as he walked in. He saw King Dreadixz sitting on his throne as usual, and a tight grin tugged

across his lips.

Dreadixz noticed Incarceration, and he faced him eye to eye. "Now tell me, did you place the gem?" Dreadixz asked first. Incarceration nodded slightly. "Yes, I have placed the gem in the forest, manipulated the Grolian Beast to find Don and take him to the exact location of where he is. I was gone for a long time, but when I came back, I noticed the beast was dead, and the gem was gone."

"I realized that Scourge Don had fought Dark Don and the Grolian Beast at the same time. Quite impressive, I must say. But now—I guess that we'll be fulfilled forever…" Dreadixz's head jerked up in surprise and confusion, then he tilted his head, staring at Incarceration with confusion. "What do you mean by that?"

Incarceration turned to smirk at Dreadixz. "Our alliance is over, for now…" "Incarceration, what are you saying?!" Dreadixz shot out of his throne. Incarceration snapped his fingers, "Do I have to explain this? Oh well… See, now I'm gonna be raiding Celestia on my own. I don't need you… Your dumb and foolish antics, which is why you got a naked end at the tip of your tail…" "Scourge Don will be with me… My weapon for war… And when he's out of uses, I'll just dump him like how I dumped you." Dreadixz's reaction was filled with shock and betrayal. "INCARCERATION! I THOUGHT WE WERE GOING TO BREAK THE PROPHECY TOGETHER! WHAT HAPPENED?!!" he yelled in fury.

"I'm sorry boss… The teaming up is over. I gotta go my own way, you know," Incarceration left, scoffing at Dreadixz. Dreadixz reached his arm out, "INCARCERATION! DON'T DO IT! COME BACK HERE!!!" But it was too late. Incarceration had already left. But then he teleported right back into the room. A triangular dual-bladed weapon with red outlines and black energy surging in it ejected from his arm, filled with nightmarish and shadowy energy. "I forgot to leave a gift…" He aimed the weapon at Dreadixz's throne, then he aimed at the roof. Energy ran through the weapon, and then a huge radiating crimson laser beam shot out of it. It hit the ceiling, and rocks started to crumble and plummet down towards Dreadixz. Dreadixz yelled once again while transforming into his dragon

form, "NO! NOT TODAY! GUARDS, GET HIM!"

Twenty guards ran out of the doors in their dragon forms from the sides. They had out their spears, locked onto Incarceration. Incarceration smirked. "Cute. Let's see if my weapon can handle this many soldiers."

The soldiers started to fly toward Incarceration, but he was unfazed. He just walked straight forward and aimed his weapon at every single one of them. He fired red energy bullets one by one, and they destroyed and one-shotted the soldiers. It created destruction with every blow, red and black explosions of energy destroyed everything in their surroundings. Soldiers fell to the ground after getting shot in the chest.

One by one, they staggered and died. Incarceration kept firing with no remorse, and then he fired the final energy bullet at the last soldier, which created another devastating explosion that ended him. Blood spread across the ground. Dreadixz watched in anger and horror, then Incarceration stood right in front of the throne where he sat. His red eyes gleamed with malice, and Dreadixz wasn't having it.

Dreadixz transformed back into his human form and fired dark lunar energy at Incarceration with rage. In a flash, Incarceration sidestepped to the right, and then he launched himself towards Dreadixz to right hook him. But Dreadixz grabbed his arm and spun around to hurl him to the ground. Incarceration got slammed, and then Dreadixz hopped off the throne. He took out his sword and ran toward Incarceration with a war shout. Incarceration charged back, his eyes filled with a lust for blood.

They both clashed with their weapons, and Dreadixz spun around to sweep Incarceration into the air. He slammed his sword onto Incarceration's chest, which blasted him like wind instantly pushing someone away.

Incarceration crashed through the walls as fragments scattered in the air. He was outside, right next to the entrance of the castle, and rain was showering from above. Though he was wet, he kept on fighting and never gave up.

He dashed toward Dreadixz at full speed and then sliced through him with his weapon in a blink of an eye. He repeated the action in every

direction, and then turned around to rush toward him and try to slice his arm. Dreadixz countered the attack with a block, then smacked Incarceration's face with his sword and spun around to slash his chest. Blood spilled out, and then Dreadixz threw in the ultimate move.

Dreadixz transformed his hands into claws as he dropped the weapon, and then rushed toward Incarceration with claws out. He slashed his body once, then again.

He did it multiple times, then hooked Incarceration in the face, now transitioning to a backhand to the face. Incarceration's face jerked to the side after the attack, and then he felt a jolt of pain in the gut as Dreadixz lunar PUNCHED the Zenith out of him.

Incarceration coughed blood as he spiraled back in the air to the side of the wall. He crashed through it, and smoke erupted with debris. Shreds of the wall were on the ground—some large, some small. Incarceration was sitting in a pile of them, bloodied. Dreadixz huffed. "Pitiful. You call yourself a Zenith, and this is the fight you give me?" He stood on a dead Lunaranite and clenched his fists. "You cannot defeat the almighty Dreadixz… Can you?" Cracks started to form on Incarceration's glowing red eye, and then his eye rounded. The eye flashed with red energy.

He teleported right in front of Dreadixz as red energy erupted from his body across the entire room, making it look like they were both in a completely red domain that was glowing. Incarceration was a silhouette right in front of Dreadixz, blending in with the red as his eye erupted with black energy. So much energy and power formed around him, and Dreadixz wasn't able to move.

Then, in an instant, he STRUCK Dreadixz's head so hard that the energy exploded, and Dreadixz got shot flying from the building as he crashed through the walls. He fell through the showering rain, feeling every drop touch his body.

He descended from the air, and then the red energy instantly shut down by Incarceration's command. The dust settled, and Incarceration stared at the dead Lunaranites. He stared back at his weapon with a smile, and then he thought to himself, "I must find Scourge Don and get him to Celestia,

now…¨

CH.28 Dust of Duke

Overbrawl and Krane were on the ground, and Duke aimed his cannon at them. Fire was in the background, flames were flickering and engulfing the entire place. It was over for them. The Power Gem was on the ground—Duke already had it in his hand.

His eyes glowed a menacing neon green, and he chuckled, "Isn't this nice? I'm going on a whole streak here… You're lucky you guys aren't Celestianites, or I would've killed you for good." Krane weakly rose his head up, blood dripping down from the top. He asked in a small voice that was weak and almost couldn't be heard, "What do you mean?" Duke narrowed his eyes on him. "It's none of your concern…"

He got up, and then he turned away to slowly walk away from the two. Overbrawl turned to Krane, "Dude, we just can't let him get the Power Gem like that!" Krane groaned, "It's useless, we're too beaten to even move right now…" Overbrawl got up, limping, but got up anyway. He trudged toward Duke who was walking away from Krane, "I'm not done yet…" Duke slowly turned his head to face Overbrawl, then he smirked, "Oh, we got a brave one here. What a fool, you're too weak to even land a hit on me… What could possibly make you say 'I'm not done yet'?" "I have a job, and that job is being a mercenary… And I only work for money to fulfill my biggest dream—becoming rich," Overbrawl said, his voice getting more deep and serious.

"I've told myself to never give up on living in luxury, and I'll make sure that I never give up now." Duke aimed his weapon at Overbrawl, ready to fire, but then Krane got up, siding right next to Overbrawl. "I'm with

him…"

"Come at me with the best of your ability…" They both threw their fists up, "GIVE US ALL YOU'VE GOT!" "Cute, fine… I'll go another round," Duke clenched his fists. All three of them launched toward each other at insane speeds, and then they all clashed, creating a huge shockwave across the entire Scarletsville.

Krane threw in an insane punch to the gut and then he uppercutted Duke's chin, which launched him flying into the air. Overbrawl teleported right above Duke to slam him down onto the ground. Duke was sent flying onto the ground, spiraling, and then he crashed onto it while rattling across the entire area.

He crashed through rocks at the speed of light, and then he backflipped to skid back. Then Krane was already in front of him with his spiritual energy and flame energy-infused fists. Krane started to throw in some rapid punches to the head and face, then he started to throw in some devastating right hooks and left hooks.

He backflipped and threw in a hard spiritual side kick to the face. This sent Duke flying sideways through the air at quick speeds. Then Overbrawl teleported right behind him and slammed his back with an explosion that rocket-launched him into the air like a rocket. He instantly looked down, and then Krane flew up into the air like a shooting star, uppercutting his face and then leaving.

He boosted back down and tackled Duke, and they started flying down in the air like two shooting stars. They both crashed onto the ground, and then Duke swept Krane, but then Overbrawl ducked over Krane and overhand punched Duke so hard that another explosion occurred.

He grabbed Duke and spun around to throw him violently so hard that Duke started flying and started crashing through large mountains, creating explosions and earthquakes. Krane started flying toward him, and then he started to fire spiritual blasts at him, which created more destruction. He then punched him once and twice and once and twice and once and twice, and then he punched him so hard that it created a widespread explosion and shockwave that destroyed the entire mountains and shook the canyons

of Scarletsville.

Duke was sent flying down to the ground and crashed on it so hard that rocks were sent flying, and he formed a crater. Overbrawl teleported right in front of him to backhand him, throw in two punches to the gut, and then flash kick him into the air like a soccer ball. Krane teleported above Duke and slammed him down so hard that he created an air-splitting explosion and shockwave across the battlefield.

The air whipped while destroying the clouds and mountains around it. There were shattering and air-splitting explosions across the air that sent fragments of rock flying everywhere. Krane then punched Duke's gut so hard that he created another destructive explosion and sent Duke flying down to the ground.

Overbrawl teleported above him and tackled him mid-air, and they started to go down to the ground. They both exchanged punches to the heads as they fell down like meteors in the air, and then they crash-landed, creating a huge explosion and shockwave that made lava fly to the sky and cut mountains in half. Duke finally locked in and grabbed Overbrawl's head to slam him onto the knee and then backhanded him hard while turning around. Overbrawl ate this up until Duke threw in a solid aerial kick to the air. Overbrawl got sent flying, and then Krane caught him. He lit Overbrawl in flames, and then threw him toward Duke while Overbrawl rolled like a soccer ball, ready to destroy and light the freakin' black out of Duke. He started rolling rapidly like a ball of fire, lighting up the entire sky. He created a rough line beneath him across the ground, and then the flames intensified.

He got close to Duke, and then he slammed his fists onto Duke's face, creating a huge explosion and shockwave that was air-splitting and shook the entirety of Scarletsville. The air crackled and whipped, destroying the things right next to it and splitting the entire ground as cracks formed and opened. Duke was slammed onto the ground because of the explosion, and then he was in a wide crater after the attack.

Dust settled and smoke slowly erupted from the crater, and Duke lay there bloodied. The wind howled, while the lava stained on the ground.

Duke slowly levitated in the air, rising up from the crater, and he stared at Krane and Overbrawl with a glare. They were in a fighting stance, glaring back at him. Duke crossed his arms, "Heh, you guys really are a powerful duo huh…"

"Well, maybe if I just use my Element more often, I could actually win this fight…" His visible black heart started to beat quicker, and faster than ever. It started to glow with neon green energy around it. Then neon energy erupted from his body, shaking the fabric of reality itself. "I may not be a Zenith, but I know how to fight like one…" He slowly levitated himself back down to the ground, then his feet touched the land. The energy around him moved around his body like green and black flames, then Duke smirked, "I don't fight just for Power Gems, I fight because I love it." "Now come as close as you like, but it's gonna be dangerous…" Overbrawl scoffed, "Dangerous is my middle name…"

"Really, because I thought it was—oh yeah! Overbrawl Dangerous Zenith. Got it now," Krane said. They both locked their eyes onto Duke's, and Duke locked his eyes onto them. Then the fight started. They both charged up their energies and they both boosted towards the air. They were already above the sky and then Krane darted towards Duke like a jet. He started to throw in two punches, a backhand, and then a flash kick that Duke blocked and then returned a right hook in the face that sent Krane spiraling back in the air. Overbrawl came next and he started to throw punches everywhere that resulted in explosions, but Duke turned from left to right dodging every single one of them, and then he axe-kicked him down to the ground. They were both falling in the air, and then Overbrawl flew back up to attack Duke. They both clashed in the air, creating an orange mixed with purple explosion.

They started to throw in punches and kicks and then Duke spun around to backhand him so hard that it created a blinding white explosion that sent Overbrawl spiraling in the air. As Overbrawl started to get sent flying in the air backwards, Duke teleported right in front of him to strike his head once, but then he repeated the action as they flew across the sky. They looked like stars clashing in the air, and then Duke exchanged fist to fist and

I meant punches to punches. Overbrawl spun around and then he stopped in the air, but it was too late when Duke neon SLAMMED his fists onto his cheekbone creating a huge ripping and air-breaking shockwave that forced Overbrawl down to the ground like a meteor. Duke teleported right above him and slammed both of his feet on Overbrawl's body, creating a huge land-breaking shockwave that actually broke the land and sent earth rocks flying in the air and lava tsunamis.

Krane was running towards him at insane speeds and then he spiritually right-hooked his face once and twice, then he followed up with an uppercut and a spin around to clock his face with another slam to the face. Duke got sent into the air but he used his jetpack to boost towards him. He grabbed Krane and then he rocket launched to the air at blitzing speeds.

They were already above the clouds, and then Duke started to throw in repeated punches to Krane's face with no remorse.

Then he steered himself towards a towering red mountain, and he crashed through it while spinning around and hurling Krane violently out of the mountain.

Krane was sent flying out of the mountain like an asteroid and then he crashed onto the ground rolling and tumbling on his back like a freaking light-speed wheel and he crashed through a large truck that bent and exploded. He got sent launched to the side at lightning speeds and then Duke teleported right behind him to strike his back which launched Krane flying the other way and then teleported right above Krane to disrespect him with an insane neon punch to the gut that created a green blinding explosion that ripped the land and flipped the air, also shattering rocks and canyons.

He grabbed Krane by the neck and slammed him down violently again and again and again. His eyes were glowing a bright neon green, and he slammed Krane onto the ground one more time creating another devastating shockwave again.

Then as soon as he was about to slam Krane down one more time, Overbrawl teleported right behind Duke in a flash and then he punched his back so hard that he created a chaotic explosion that blew up half of

Scarletsville like a nuke.

"TAKE THIS!" Overbrawl shouted as he flew to the air with his eyes bright red. A large chaotic red beam shot out of his eyes, glowing with radiant chaotic energy. It ran towards Duke while creating a line across the ground, then it hit creating another air-whipping explosion that created high devastating winds that acted like hurricanes.

The winds were trying to pull Duke away, but Duke didn't back down. He smeared the blood off of his mouth, and he flashed towards Overbrawl like a demon. He leaped at light speed with his fists out ready to throw in a punch, and Overbrawl does the same thing with his orange crackling chaotic energy fists.

They both clash in the air once again, and then Overbrawl grabs his leg to throw Duke around again and again and again to throw him across the battlefield. Duke was sliding across the floor on his back while feeling the insane pain and damage, and then Overbrawl was already right in front of him ready to slam a freaking nuke explosion on him. As the explosion shot Duke up into the air, he looked down while shaking his head and he already saw Overbrawl coming for him like he wanted to kill him badly.

They both clashed with each other and they started to throw in back-to-back punches. Duke threw in two left hooks, right hooks, and then a sweep to the air and then he axe-kicked Overbrawl which Overbrawl countered by blocking and then he spun around rapidly to deliver a huge aerial punch to the face which created a hard explosion that ripped the air and ripped the ground beneath them. Duke was sent flying down to the ground as the air started slapping and whipping him, inflicting pain upon his body. When he looked up at the air, Overbrawl already had a colossal chaotic energy ball that was the size of the actual moon. It was above him, creating shadows across the shattered land. Duke heated up as he started falling, he tried to fly but he was too injured in order to do so.

"CHAOTIC BLAST!!!!" Overbrawl threw the ball at Duke like it was a baseball and it started to fly towards Duke at the speed of a baseball. Duke started to get blinded by the intense orange light the orb gave, and then that was until when he looked beneath him, he saw Krane with a huge

purple orb that was about the same size as Overbrawl's ball, and he was ready to throw the crackling mix of spiritual and flaming energy at Duke.

Duke fell from the sky like a meteor as he heated up, fire forming on his back. Both of the energies started to get closer to him, and closer, and closer. He quickly prayed to himself, wishing that he wouldn't die, but it was too late.

The two orbs combined with each other and they hit Duke so hard that it created a blinding white explosion and shockwave mixed with black and white that destroyed everything around Scarletsville. It destroyed King Scar's castle, and the air whipped, slashing all of the mountains and canyons. Lava spilled around everywhere and acted like a lava tsunami.

The land completely shattered and got destroyed as animals started to get wiped out as well. Mountains and canyons were being sliced in half, lava was going everywhere, animals died, it was complete chaos. Meteors fell from the sky which was an attack created by Overbrawl, and they hit the location that created more destruction for Scarletsville. It created a huge hurricane and another blinding orange and white explosion that acted like a huge fiery explosion. Wind started to crash out and lash out, getting stronger, it destroyed each and every last bit there was of Scarletsville. Then, everything was gone… The two were right next to each other, panting and panting and panting after the huge attack they just created. Krane collapsed onto the ground, tired more than ever. They were both in a huge crater that spread the entirety of Scarletsville, and they looked down in the middle of the crater, nothing was there. It seems as if Duke had vanished, all there was was smoke floating in the air and the complete destruction of Scarletsville. Overbrawl collapsed onto his knees, almost as tired as Krane. He looked down at the Fury Power Gem, they still had it. Duke must've forgotten it. Overbrawl took the gem, and held it tight. They both slowly got up, beaten and battered. Then, they heard someone say, "Give us the Power Gem…"

CH.29 Conflict

Olsen's voice cut through the smoke: "Yeah, you heard me. Hand over that Power Gem."

His gaze locked on the orange gem clenched between Krane and Overbrawl. Krane just rolled his eyes, looking both exhausted and done.

"Listen, kids," Krane muttered, voice sharp with that signature Zenith-level sass. "I'm not wasting my breath fighting you over this little thing."

Overbrawl grinned, hands on his hips, white teeth flashing. "The Chosen Ones… Don't y'all have a prophecy to fulfill instead of chasing Power Gems?"

"If we don't find them all," Ella shot back, "who knows what you two would do with them."

Electricity buzzed around Prince like static on a stormy day. "Let's just get this show on the road. You give us the angry gem, we give you a beating. Sound good?"

Overbrawl's grin dropped. He clenched his fists, helping Krane stand as their energy sparked around them. Both sides stared each other down. The battlefield was scorched—lava veins glowing under cracked black rock, smoke twisting in the air like angry spirits.

Overbrawl tucked the Power Gem into his scarf. "Let's not let it melt," he smirked.

Olsen hesitated for a split second. Former Zeniths weren't pushovers. But they needed that gem. No time for doubts. He turned to the team, voice low: "We go strategic. Me, Archie, and Prince on offense. Ella and

Eli defense. Demaurion stays middle, water-blast anybody who gets close."

He locked eyes with Demaurion. "I'll push them toward you. Trust me."

"Cool, cool," Demaurion yawned.

Before the plan could even breathe, Archie lit up like a bonfire. "ENOUGH TALK! LET'S GO!"

Flames erupted as he launched forward like a rocket.

"ARCHIE, WAIT—!" Olsen's shout got swallowed by the explosion Archie left in his wake.

Archie swung first, fire-wrapped fist aiming for Overbrawl's jaw. Overbrawl blocked it easy, arm glowing orange.

"Oh, please," Overbrawl smirked.

But Archie wasn't done. He ducked low, uppercutting Overbrawl so hard it sent him rocketing into the sky in a fiery burst.

"Forget it—GO!" Olsen ordered. Weapon drawn, he charged Krane.

Krane barely registered Archie's hit before Olsen was in his face, socking him so hard the air cracked. Krane flew backward, tumbling. Prince zipped in, spinning and kicking Krane mid-air like a literal lightning bottle flip.

Krane caught himself in the air, growling, firing energy blasts down. Prince dodged effortlessly, lightning-fast, zigzagging through the beams before striking Krane in the gut with a flash-powered punch that echoed with bone-ripping force.

Krane grunted in pain, flying higher as Overbrawl shot back down like a meteor, slamming Olsen into the ground.

Shockwaves exploded outward as fists flew—two rights, a left—Olsen dodging each, retaliating with a hammer strike to Overbrawl's face so powerful it cracked the earth. Overbrawl stumbled but wasn't out. Olsen pressed on, fists and rocks flying until he slammed Overbrawl into the dirt and sent him skidding across the battlefield.

Overbrawl didn't stay down long—he launched upward, only to get blasted right back down by Ella from above. Sand and dust exploded. Lava spewed from new cracks in the earth.

Ella hit Overbrawl again, uppercutting his jaw, blood flying. Prince joined the chaos, zipping around Overbrawl in a blue vortex, building

energy. One final slam from above sent Overbrawl crashing through split rocks like a thunder god.

Krane wasn't sitting still. Fire blasts rained from above as Prince dodged again. Overbrawl recovered just enough to punch Prince across the field, sending him crashing through a mountain in a blur of light and dust.

Krane teleported behind Archie mid-charge, landing a savage jab to the back, followed by a spin-kick that cracked ribs on impact. Archie spiraled up through the sky as Krane powered up, violet energy tearing around his arms.

"INVINCIBLE SPIRITS!" Krane roared. Five giant beams swirled together, aiming right for Archie.

But Ella wasn't having it. She intercepted, sand swiping upward in a wave, deflecting the attack with sheer force. Krane teleported again, grabbing Ella mid-air, swinging her like a ragdoll and hurling her across the field.

Overbrawl appeared in front of her mid-flight, grabbing her head and slamming her into the ground with another brutal explosion. Dust, rock, lava—it all went flying. Overbrawl's eyes flared red as he unleashed a furious barrage, sending Ella crashing through five stone towers like they were paper.

Archie had had enough.

With fists blazing, he blitzed in, punching Overbrawl so hard flames exploded out of the guy's back. He grabbed Overbrawl by the head, slamming him down, fire raging like a living thing.

"INSANE AFTERBURNER!"

One final punch sent Overbrawl sky-high in a beam of flame. The Power Gem tumbled free—Archie caught it like nothing.

But Krane wasn't down yet.

Charging up with thermal energy, Krane growled, "Easy kill…" His watch pulsed dangerously.

Right then, Olsen transformed his arm—jagged stone extending like a blade—and drove it into Krane's chest.

Blood sprayed, and Krane choked on a scream. Olsen held him up by

the rock-arm, eyes steady.

Krane's face darkened. "LET ME GO, YOU EARTHNITE!" he shouted, flailing in desperation.

Olsen yanked the rock out, and Krane dropped to his knees, clutching his chest, blood running down in rivers.

He coughed, grimacing through the pain, voice rough but alive: "…Screw you all."

Krane slumped forward, collapsing face-first, but still breathing. Barely.

Olsen exhaled hard. No kill today. But Krane was definitely done for now.

Prince smashed his way out from under rubble, lightning punching his exit. Bruised, bleeding, but walking.

Everyone gathered, battered and gasping. Ella's hair was a mess, her body scratched and bruised. Eli was barely standing. Archie leaned on Prince, still on fire but grinning.

And who wasn't even scratched?

Demaurion.

Everyone glared at him.

"You lazy freakin' Leviathan!" Olsen snapped, tail lashing.

From a safe distance, Demaurion shrugged. "What?"

"YOU. DID. NOTHING!" Archie coughed, furious.

Prince was fuming. "You just STOOD there!"

"Oceananites are just chill like that," Demaurion said, dead serious. "Y'all wouldn't get it."

Ella looked like she might explode. "YOU—YOU LIRM!!"

"Isn't that racist?" Demaurion asked casually.

Eli just facepalmed.

Olsen sighed, shaking his head. "You really did nothing. Whatever. Let's find Don. Earthnites have a good sense of smell—I'll track him."

With that, they moved on, leaving Krane and Overbrawl behind, broken but alive.

The sky over Celestia stayed wrapped in golden clouds, like the whole kingdom had its own permanent sunset. Towers rose up everywhere—massive gold, white, and yellow buildings shimmering like they were carved from sunlight itself. Streets glowed golden. Sidewalks sparkled. Even the poles had glitter sprinkled on 'em.

Dragons flew overhead, cutting through sunbeams like living comets. The air buzzed with the wingbeats of Celestianite dragons, their white and gold scales flashing in the light. Below them, millions of Celestianites filled the kingdom—dragons and people both. Shimmering scales. Feathered tails. Armor flashing.

From a distance, past the crowded city blocks, stood a giant golden staircase leading up to a blinding set of gates. Behind those gates sat Celestia Castle: a towering monster of a structure with ten golden spires stabbing into the sky so high the top disappeared into space. The tallest tower touched the stars, literally. A flag with a golden dragon emblem waved at the peak.

Inside that castle, top floor, golden everything: four figures sat at a long, shining table in the middle of a room big enough to feel like its own sky.

Jaylen. Guervens. Coltz. Prince Lock.

- **Jaylen** — Dream Elemental Celestianite
- *Goofy dude, loves to rage bait. That one guy in the squad who never takes anything seriously until he has to.*
- **Prince Lock** — Light Elemental Celestianite
- *Protective older brother to Starla. Calm, level-headed, and always ready to step in if things get too wild.*
- **Coltz** — Energy Element
- *Always amped, never stops moving. Thinks everything's a race or a challenge; serious hyperactive energy.*
- **Guervens** — Magma Element
- *Crash out mode activated. Explosive and unpredictable, ready to melt anything in his path.*

Golden arc-shaped windows lined the walls. Light spilled in from all sides, showing off clouds and stars outside.

Prince Lock sat at the head of the table—tall, serious, glowing white scales pulsing faintly like moonlight. Crystal horns, one purple, one gold. His wings shimmered purple dust with every shift. His tail, with golden rings around it, flicked quietly behind him. Lock barely moved. Barely spoke. But when he did, everybody listened.

Jaylen leaned back in his chair, cyan eyes sharp under yellow-and-cyan Celestianite armor. Sleek retractable wings folded at his back.

Coltz sat slouched, grinning, golden Energy Element glow in his movements. Dude always seemed like he was about to crack a joke.

Then there was Guervens—black-skinned Flamenite with magma traits, wearing red and black knight armor. But loudest thing about him wasn't his armor—it was his mouth. That dude was crashout loud. Always the first one to pop off.

Which he did, slamming his hands on the table first. "YO, Jaylen! You gonna tell us why we sittin' up here, or are we just staring at clouds today?!"

Jaylen didn't flinch. "We gotta talk serious. Lunaranites."

Guervens leaned forward, face scrunched up. "Man, AGAIN?! Bro, this is like the fifth time—!"

Jaylen cut him off. "Not like before. They're gonna raid us. And this time… they mean it."

Coltz chimed in, kicking his feet up. "We sure we can't just bribe 'em with some Celestia-Puffs? Works on me."

Lock's eyes narrowed. "No, you fools. Not Celestia-Puffs. This is war."

Jaylen stood now, voice rising. "After Colton's last spy mission… Lunaranites are prepping for another raid. But here's the thing—" His fists hit the table with a loud slam. "It wasn't Dreadixz calling the shots this time."

That pulled everyone up short. Even Coltz stopped smiling.

Guervens frowned hard. "Wait, hold up—what? Then WHO?!"

Jaylen's voice dropped low. "Someone worse. Someone bigger. Stronger. Meaner. I don't even know their name yet. All I know? Midnight."

Guervens exploded, slapping the table so hard his chair nearly tipped. "MIDNIGHT?! YO, THAT'S WHEN I'M SLEEPING, BRO! THEY REALLY CHOOSING MIDNIGHT FOR THIS?!"

Lock's voice was low, controlled. "They'll hit when we're weakest. Typical."

"And we don't got the numbers for it," Jaylen added, slamming the table again for emphasis. "Without King Vigilzante—"

"Bro carried the whole squad…" Coltz muttered.

Jaylen nodded slowly. "Exactly. We need help."

Guervens threw his hands in the air, standing up now, chair skidding back. "So what's the play, Jaylen?! You gonna call in some heroes or what? 'Cause I ain't just gonna stand here yelling all night. Midnight's a few hours away!"

Jaylen met his gaze. "That's exactly it."

He glanced at each of them one by one.

"We're calling the Chosen Ones."

The room went dead quiet, tension sharp as crystal.

Then Coltz cracked a grin, sitting up straight. "Yo… now we're talking."

Guervens leaned forward on the table, fiery eyes flashing. "About time."

CH.30 Conflict Rising

Duke landed hard on a distant mountain overlooking the Land of Hearts. His knees buckled. His hand shot to his chest—blood already spilling from his glowing, cracked heart.

That last hit from Krane and Overbrawl had wrecked him.

His neon heart flickered out of his chest, slipping through his fingers like glass. Duke snatched it mid-fall, voice breaking into a desperate whisper:

"No, no, no—don't die on me, please…"

He pressed it back into his chest, forcing it to pulse again, and slumped down right there on the mountaintop. Breathing ragged. Eyes distant.

The kingdom below shimmered under the night sky—soft pink towers glowing faint through the mist. The Blushinites were asleep. The whole world felt quiet… except inside Duke's head.

Way below him, trees stretched for miles, but nothing reached as high as this mountain.

He grabbed a rock and hurled it with all the fury in his body.

"They got the Power Gem!" he snapped, voice echoing off the cliffs.

The rock clanged off a tower and vanished into the dark.

Duke adjusted his mechanical suit, gritting his teeth, metal scraping against metal. Then… he pulled his heart out again. Staring down at it. Watching it flicker in his shaking hand.

A tear slipped from his eye.

"I'll do it… Family, friends… everyone…" he whispered.

One Power Gem was still strapped to his side—the Intelligence Gem. But it wasn't enough. Nothing was.

Duke was fifteen now. But ever since he was twelve, since Lunaranites tore his life apart—parents gone, friends gone, everyone gone—it always circled back to one thing.

The worst of it wasn't even losing his family.

It was her.

Grace.

His one and only.

— FLASHBACK —

Chains clanked against stone. Duke hung against a wall, arms bound tight. His voice echoed through the dark hall, screaming:

"Help! Somebody!"

No one came.

The Celestianites had promised they'd save him. But they weren't here yet. Too slow.

Then, the arched door across from him burst open.

King Dreadixz walked in. That monster. His boots thudding on the red carpet, dragging something—someone—behind him.

Grace.

She stumbled forward in cuffs, wings bound. White feathers with golden sparks. A Celestianite girl. Her golden tail dragged behind her. Her horns hadn't even grown in yet. Her yellow eyes shimmered with fear.

Dreadixz shoved her onto the floor. She hit hard, crying out.

Duke's voice cracked. "GRACE! No, no—what are you doing?!"

He pulled against the chains, metal biting into his wrists.

Dreadixz turned, spear in hand. His voice rang out cold:

"This is for the war."

"No… don't… please!" Duke's whole body shook. "She's all I have left!"

Dreadixz ignored him. Lifted his weapon.

Duke lost it, screaming until his voice broke:

"PLEASE! KILL ME INSTEAD! DON'T TAKE HER, I GOT NOBODY! NO FAMILY, NO FRIENDS, NO ONE TO LOVE ME! SHE'S ALL I GOT LEFT—DON'T TAKE THAT TOO!"

His eyes blurred with tears, vision swimming.

Grace's voice broke through, soft like wind through clouds:

"It's okay, Duke… Even if I'm gone… I'll still be around you. Always."

Dreadixz smirked like it meant nothing.

"She said she agrees."

Duke's heart collapsed.

"No—NO!"

The spear swung.

Blood sprayed across the floor like paint.

Grace's body hit the ground in two pieces. Her golden tail twitched once. Then nothing.

Her wings folded shut, silent.

Duke saw everything.

He didn't just cry.

He shattered.

Screaming, wailing, pulling against the chains until his wrists bled. His throat raw. His soul breaking.

Dreadixz laughed.

A sound too evil to describe—like something that shouldn't exist in this world or any other.

When the chains finally broke, Duke fell to his knees beside Grace's body.

He couldn't even speak.

Just held her hand.

Just stayed there.

Then, for one last moment, her spirit brushed against him—soft golden light curling around his shaking form.

"I love you…" she whispered.

And she was gone.

Oscar was awake.

Still up. 10 PM sharp. Way past when he should've knocked out. But here he was, wide-eyed in his room inside the castle, brain running laps.

His whole room? Pink. Walls, ceiling, even the bed. And all over those walls? Red heart-shaped pictures of Starla. Like, full shrine status. A soft lamp next to him lit up the whole place, casting everything in a cozy glow.

Oscar sat in his big royal pink bed, legs crossed, not even tired. On the red nightstand right next to him was his phone… and, of course, a framed picture of Starla with a heart on it.

He already knew why he couldn't sleep.

Starla.

The type of Celestianite girl that made his heart skip like five beats in a row. That's why he stayed loyal, always trying to be smooth, always trying to flirt—even though, let's be real, it never worked when Scourge Don was around. Don was his boy and all, but that other version of Don? The dark one? The edgy menace?

That dude made Oscar question reality.

Why was Don so different sometimes?

Oscar lay back on his bed, eyes on the ceiling, Starla plushie clutched in one arm. His brain just kept running it over, again and again, like a broken record.

"What could even make Don flip like that…?"

He stared into space for a second, then shrugged it off with a sigh:

"Eh. Maybe it was Incarceration."

Meanwhile, Don sat in the dark cave, quiet, just… thinking.

Was Starla right?

He didn't know. Honestly, he couldn't tell if it was a yes or a no anymore. The only thing he really felt sure about was one thing:

Free will.

Or more like… the fact that his was gone.

Don knew deep down, clear as day, that he couldn't think for himself anymore. Couldn't even think for anyone else.

He was Scourge Don now. Said it a thousand times in his head. But this time? He really meant it. It wasn't just a phase.

And yet, somewhere in there, the real Don—the one buried under all that Scourge Don weight—he was still asking the question:

Why did it even start?

And he already knew.

It started when he left Ella. Ran into the forest.

That was the crack in the glass.

Don knew Olsen was still alive somewhere, injured bad but alive. He knew that for a fact. But he couldn't shake the real fear. The prophecy. He didn't want anything to do with it. That's why he ran. That's why he turned into… this.

But the weird thing was… ever since Scourge Don took over, the prophecy didn't scare him as much.

What scared him more…

Was himself.

The real Don sat there in the dark, thinking about the future. Imagining it. Would the world break apart because of him? Would he become the next Dark Don for real?

Would he?

Hopeless. That's what it felt like.

But then… maybe—just maybe—he could still choose.

Stay a Scourge Don…

Or stop one.

In the Wizard's Domain, near the table buried in old books and glowing potions, the crew stood in a loose circle, all staring at the potion Eldritch had brewed up like it was some ancient holy grail.

Kayson leaned in, peering through the round glass bottle like he was

about to take a sip himself. His stomach actually growled. "So you're telling me… you need Leviathan meat and Gadian Seawater just to make this stuff?"

Eldritch gave that classic old-man chuckle, stroking his beard. "Yes, my fellow children, that's exactly how you create the Olibigrath Potion… This potion holds the power to turn your friend against the negative versions of themselves."

Sophia's tiger tail flicked straight up. "Wait. *'Turn against'*? E-excuse me, what?!"

Eldritch just nodded, all calm and wise. "Indeed. It turns the user against the bad versions of themselves. Pretty neat, right?"

Sophia shook her head hard and set the jar back on the wooden table like it was cursed. "Look, old man, we're not trying to force Don to go full anime villain on himself! We're trying to fix him emotionally, like how Incarceration messed him up in the first place."

Eldritch raised a finger slowly, dramatic as ever, stroking his beard. "I'm afraid I don't have any recipes for fixing the heart or mind, young one. That's… something you all must figure out yourselves."

Everyone looked around at each other like they'd just been hit with the world's most inconvenient side quest. William flared his pterodactyl wings suddenly, scaring the soul out of Kai.

Eldritch turned, pacing off between two massive bookshelves, and plopped himself down in a rocking chair like a man with all the time in the universe. Beside him, a swirling blue portal quietly spun.

He sat there for a second, looking almost half-asleep, until Angel stepped up beside him. "Okay… what are you trying to show us now, grandpa?"

Eldritch smiled softly. "I'm glad you asked."

With one smooth motion, he raised his staff high, then stabbed it into the portal. The swirling energy split like water, rippling across the room, and the portal expanded into a wide-open window.

Everyone leaned in as the scene revealed itself—Celestia. The glowing yellow clouds, the shimmering golden towers, Celestianites moving through the streets like living stars.

But then…

It all snapped.

Lunaranites came flooding in. Spears raised, chaos unleashed. Celestianite soldiers burst from the castle like beams of light, wings flaring, battle cries tearing the air apart.

The crew stared in silence as buildings exploded from radiant blasts. Lunaranites clashed violently, both sides falling. A dragon-like Lunaranite leader—not even Dreadixz—flew straight through the chaos, sword flashing. He cut through the Celestianites like nothing.

Jocabed stepped back, eyes wide. "What… what's going on?!"

Everyone whipped around frantically, looking for Dark Don.

Nothing.

Dark Don was *gone*. Like he'd just dipped out mid-scene. Not a single trace.

Then, right as things couldn't get weirder, Keyler's phone started blaring. The sudden ringtone made William flinch so hard his wings knocked a stack of books over.

Keyler yanked it out of his pocket, slapped it to his ear. His eyes narrowed. Whoever was on the other end was talking fast. Real fast. Urgent words. Dangerous words. Like world-ending level bad.

Before anyone could ask, the line cut off.

Keyler stared down at the phone in his hand for a second, then slid it back into his pocket real slow. His whole face shifted. Gone was the usual jokester—this was Keyler's first ever serious face.

He turned to the crew. Voice low, steady:

"Celestia. Now."

CH.31 Beasts

Rain poured like the sky was having a full-on breakdown. Thunder roared, lightning lit up everything in sharp white flashes, and the crew sprinted through the flatlands of the Rufty Mountains like their lives depended on it—because they kinda did.

Wind howled, slapping trees sideways and making mountains look like they were about to wobble. Clothes soaked, hair drenched, and Mason's voice cut through the storm louder than the thunder:

"I KNEW SOMETHING WAS UP! DARK DON REALLY BETRAYED US!"

Sophia whipped her head around mid-run, rain streaking down her face. "DOES ANYONE EVEN KNOW WHERE CELESTIA IS?!"

Nobody slowed down. Angel shouted over the chaos, "I CAN'T OPEN PORTALS! PROPHECY RULES—THEY'RE BLOCKED!"

Another lightning bolt hit a mountain top, lighting up everything like a camera flash from the gods. William hustled up next to Sophia, yelling, "WE GOTTA MOVE FASTER OR WE'RE GONNA—"

BOOM! Thunder cut him off mid-sentence. "—DIE IN THIS STORM!"

Jocabed was next, voice hoarse. "HOW ARE WE GETTING TO CELESTIA?!"

That's when everyone stopped at once, skidding in the mud. A massive blue river stretched ahead, wide as forever, feeding into the Unknown Sea. No name. No one talks about it. Just big, blue, and intimidating.

Angel squinted through storm-blurred glasses. His hair stuck to his face, but he clocked the river. Then lightning struck again.

He shook his head hard. "I GOT AN IDEA!"

Angel bolted toward a big log like it weighed nothing and slapped it down into the river. He eyed some jagged rocks nearby, a whole pile of wooden logs stacked against them. Javier raised his hand, levitating the logs with his Control powers and flinging them into the water.

"WE'LL USE 'EM AS A RAFT!" Angel hollered as thunder shook the sky.

Then… that noise.

A blood-curdling roar echoed from far off. Low at first. Almost like a dinosaur that skipped breakfast.

Everyone froze. The rain, the river, the night sky—it all just felt heavier. Lightning flashed, and there it was: a silhouette. A monster. Huge.

Angel wasted no time. He jumped on the raft. "NO STANDING AROUND—WE GOTTA GO!"

Jocabed facepalmed mid-storm. "You serious? You think *that* thing's getting us to Celestia?"

But before anyone could argue, the roar hit again—louder. The silhouette shifted in the next flash of lightning. Then another one appeared. And another.

One in front. One behind. One in the middle.

Sophia tapped the pink button on her headphones, recording the roar. Then, whispering low and cold:

"Everybody… don't move."

Out from the shadows, they finally saw them—Griorgriffons.

Bipedal stone-skinned beasts. Parallelogram-shaped heads with jagged rocky spikes. Tiny T-Rex arms. Black, empty eyes. And jaws filled with way too many messed-up teeth.

Everyone knew the drill: Don't move. Don't talk. Don't make eye contact. Not even a blink if you could help it.

The Griorgriffons circled the crew, sniffing, growling low. One tail-smacked William right across the face. Man didn't even flinch—barely. Lonnie side-eyed him with that *don't-you-dare* look.

The creatures circled… paused… lifted their heads…

And turned away.

Relief hit everyone like fresh air.

Then.

"AHHHHH-CHOOOOOOOO!"

Keyler. Of course.

Sophia whipped around, furious. "KEYLER, I SWEAR—"

The Griorgriffons snapped back toward them, jaws open wide. The first charged. Everyone lit up their Elements at once. Mason yelled:

"YOU OWE ME SO MANY DOUGHNUTS FOR THIS!"

The fight popped off instantly. Jocabed rammed the first Griorgriffon, sending it flying into a mountain with debris raining down. Emely swooped in from above in her Ice Bird form, freezing it solid before it shattered into icy chunks.

But another beast wasn't down. It bit Jocabed's neck hard, slamming her into the mud. Kwa'asja rolled in armadillo-style to help, but the beast snatched her mid-roll and yeeted her across the field.

Keyler in spider form tried to clamp onto it, but got kicked like a soccer ball across the flatland. William zipped through the storm in pterodactyl form, slamming his beak into the monster again and again until blood sprayed everywhere.

Finally, William pierced clean through its chest like lightning. The brute dropped.

Third one lunged—and Sophia was already on its back, biting down tiger-style, spinning it into the dirt like it was nothing. Fedjina dove down like a meteor, spiraling in flames—until the beast caught her mid-air and hurled her at Sophia.

Mason didn't wait. In Doughnut Bear form, he grabbed the thing by its skull and full-body slammed it into the mud. Lonnie kicked it sideways in Forest Fawn form, and Javier's quills lit it up from a distance like a living dartboard.

Mason uppercutted it skyward, Kayson aerial-slammed it back down with both fists, and Angel opened a portal under it just in time for Mason to knock it straight through.

Angel wiped rain off his glasses like nothing happened. "Lava pit in Scarletsville. Nice place."

When it was finally over, the crew was wrecked.

Ryan slumped against a rock, bandaged up, clutching his chest. "How the heck are we getting to Celestia if Angel can't portal us?"

Jocabed wasn't looking great—laying down, Arctic Fox form, blood matting her white fur. Her neck was torn up bad.

Keyler, back in human form, let out a tired sigh. "Lonnie… you got anything?"

Lonnie shook her head. "Out of energy. Vines only for now."

Everyone else was battered. Fedjina's beak was cracked, wings torn. Sophia had fresh scars but held up. Keyler somehow walked away in one piece.

Jocabed though…

She was lucky she was still breathing.

Sophia finally stood, rain dripping off her headphones. She looked toward the Forgotten Wizard's Domain in the distance, back where they started. Smirked a little through the pain.

"Guys… common sense. We just use one of the portals in the cave."

Everyone just groaned.

Duke clutched his injured arm, cybernetic suit sparking. His wings hung crooked, armor dented. With a final metallic groan, it all fell off—slamming to the ground in a heap.

Neon green energy surged around his body like wildfire.

"You're one of the few kids I've met that makes me smile," Duke said,

voice cold. "But that smile? Gotta fade now." His fists clenched, energy swirling hotter. "You don't know what's coming. You don't know me."

Starla backed up, sweat rolling down her temple—but her stare never wavered.

"Still brave, huh?" Duke raised his cannon, eyes glinting. Energy pulsed in a neon rhythm.

Starla charged, fists glowing with astral flames.

Duke fired.

The blast struck her dead-on, slamming her through buildings. Explosions lit up the night sky as towers collapsed in a chain reaction. Starla lay in a crater, flickering flames around her.

Duke aimed again. "Too easy—"

A sonic boom cracked through the air.

Duke turned, just in time to see a figure diving from the sky—dark violet energy swirling around them. Blushinites below stopped and stared, mistaking it for a falling star.

But it wasn't.

The figure landed on Duke like a meteor, erupting in blinding light. The ground shook, towers crumbled, mountains trembled.

Duke hit the dirt hard, cannon knocked aside.

Standing over him: Scourge Don. Mask cracked, claws sharp.

"You leave her alone," Don growled, voice ice cold.

Duke chuckled, spitting blood. "What are you supposed to be? A hero with an identity crisis?"

Don pressed his shoe into Duke's chest. "Not a hero. Not a villain. Not sure what I am… But I know you crossed the wrong line."

Scorch landed beside Starla, growling with sharp teeth exposed. Starla pushed herself up, panting.

Duke smirked through blood. "So naive… These Power Gems? They're already mine."

In a flash, Duke leapt up—swinging a neon-charged fist toward Don's back.

Don caught it one-handed.

A shockwave burst out, splitting the air.

"Pathetic," Don muttered, slamming his other fist into Duke's face. Duke staggered. Don didn't let up—left hook, right hook, overhand, spin-kick, and a vicious dropkick that sent Duke crashing through tower after tower.

As rubble fell, Duke's eyes flashed neon.

"COME ON, THEN!"

They both launched. Fists collided mid-air, creating a shattering shockwave that rattled the entire Land of Hearts.

Starla climbed onto Scorch, flying toward a safer zone, rain trailing behind them like falling glass.

Meanwhile, Duke and Don tore through the sky, clashing like meteorites. Don spun into an axe kick that sent Duke spiraling downward. But Duke rocketed back up, flash-kicking Don's chin, grabbing him mid-air.

Don struggled in Duke's grip as they plummeted.

Duke grinned. "Isn't this fun?!"

They hit the ground like a nuke. Debris rained for miles.

Duke held Don up by the neck under the moonlight.

"This is where you fall," Duke hissed, fist glowing neon green. He reeled back, slammed a punch into Don's face, then gut-punched him skyward like a human bullet.

Duke followed, teleporting mid-flight, hammering Don from every angle—punch after punch, uppercut after uppercut, throwing Don like a rag doll through clouds and blizzards. One hit in Scarletsville, another across Thunderstark, a final gut-punch over the Gadian Sea.

Don smashed into the earth, carving a crater deep into the ground.

He lay there, mask cracked, blood running.

Duke dropped down beside him, grabbing Don's silver cannon. With cold efficiency, Don ripped it from Duke's arm—cords snapping, sparks flying. He crushed the weapon with both hands, neon and black energy fizzling out.

A silver Power Gem slipped from Duke's grip.

Don stepped forward to grab it—

But then came the voices.

Olsen. Prince. Demaurion. Archie. Ella. Eli.

"Don," Olsen called, voice steady. "You have a choice. Come with us… or stay alone. We need those Power Gems to stop Duke. Incarceration. Dark Don. Maybe even Dreadixz."

Olsen's tone softened. "I'm your first friend, remember? Just choose."

Don stared at them, silent. Inside, the real Don was still trapped in Scourge Don's cage. Was there even a point anymore?

Without a word, Don turned away, cape dragging through the dirt.

As he walked, Power Gems slipped from his torn cape—cyan, pink, black. Duke's eyes locked on them.

While Don kept walking, Duke teleported in a flash, scooping the Gems into his hand, hiding them beneath his wings, teleporting away.

Now he had four.

Back at the cave, Starla sat quietly beside her own three Gems, too beaten to join the fight. Scorch sat beside her, silent as always.

She whispered, watching Don's silhouette move through the storm:

"Think he'll be alright…?"

Scorch didn't answer.

Just a quiet shake of his head.

And out there, the battle wasn't over. Not yet.

CH.32 Don…. Come Back

Celestia was a raging battlefield. Everyone ran through the warzone as explosions were heard across the distance, and they had to stop each time they found an orange blast of flame booming towards the sky.

Sophia covered her head and lowered it as another explosion was heard from right next to them.

Sounds of war cries and screaming echoed as they ran across the elongated golden bridge that used to be shimmering and sparkly, but was now starting to get smoky because of the chaos happening from afar.

Celestianites were soaring through the air, battling the Lunaranites with their spears.

They looked like a whole flock of birds going against another flock of birds. Energy blasts from cannons were being fired at them, but they missed and hit the bridge instead. They were sprinting, their legs going as fast as a roadrunner. The sky was a sick orange, filled with smoke in the air, as the golden clouds started to wipe away. They were running towards golden castles and towers while on the bridge, which stretched almost to the peak of the Earth.

Buildings were crumbling and falling down—they staggered and crashed onto the ground, creating loud noises. "ALRIGHT, WE GOTTA SOME-HOW FIND THE BATTLEFIELD! SO THEN WE CAN HELP JAYLEN AND THE OTHERS!" William shouted loudly through the wind of the loud shooting and screaming.

Then—out of nowhere—a large Lunaranite was hurling toward them at

maximum speed. Emely shouted, "WATCH OUT!" She quickly opened her hand and fired an ice blast at the beast, freezing it to death. It landed on the ground and tumbled across it, snapping into pieces.

Emely skidded back as the crew halted beside her. She looked up and saw a bunch of Lunaranites flying toward them with their spears and blasters, ready to attack. They all gritted their teeth and charged up their Elements.

They stared up with determined eyes, preparing for what was coming next. Millions of black and purple shades started flying toward them at the speed of sound, while explosions raged and buildings collapsed all around.

Fires broke out across the city of the Enchanted Kingdom. The golden and yellow, once-shiny buildings that used to tower tall, now fell short and tilted, collapsing to their death, smashing into the ground—demolished more than ever. Sophia looked up into the air to find an escape, so they wouldn't have to waste time fighting the Lunaranites. Something clicked in her mind as she turned to Angel, then charged her arms with sound energy to fire it at him from afar.

Angel jerked his head in confusion, yelling, "WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!" The soundwave launched Angel into the air before Sophia could explain, and he soared over the flock of Lunaranites with swirling dark blue energy trailing behind him. Sophia's voice broke through the wind like thunder as she cried to Angel, "CREATE A DOMAIN NOW! MAKE IT A BIG AND STRONG ONE!!!"

Angel looked down, then nodded as his glasses gleamed with determination. He used his owl wings to blast himself higher, positioning behind the Lunaranites. He opened his arms as blue energy started to swirl around them, then clapped his hands. Five dark blue swirling portals appeared behind his back.

He grasped his hands together, a worried but determined look on his face. "This could take up all my energy! You sure about this, Sophia?!" His hair started flying wildly as blue energy swirled around his body.

The wind went insane. The place darkened as the energy took over

the area. The Lunaranites looked up at Angel with confused expressions. Angel stood in the air, eyes gleaming a dark blue with a serious look. His voice boomed like thunder as he shouted through the sky, "VORTEXES DOMAIN!!!"

All the portals swirled around his body, spiraling from toe to head, then merged together to create a booming dark blue shockwave that shot out of the portals, spreading from the bridge to the Enchanted Kingdom. The shockwave caused the wind to speed up, harsher than ever. The wind howled—everyone's hair was flailing from it—as the portals fused into one massive black hole with swirling energy inside. Sophia covered her eyes with her arm, then lowered it to look up at Angel. He stood in the air with a massive swirling black hole above his head, holding it like a trophy.

His eyes glowed a bright yet dark blue, energy swirling from head to toe like a vortex. His face was straight, his glasses gleamed with radiant energy. Sophia smirked. "Alright, now all we have to do is get to the Enchanted Kingdom without dying! Quick and steady!" Daysni yelled, looking up at Angel as he distracted the Lunaranites. Sophia placed her palm onto the bridge.

Sound energy started to pulse through her hand rapidly. She looked up at the Lunaranites with gleaming golden eyes. Mason peered down at her and asked, "What are you doing?!" "Making a shockwave to launch us from this bridge to the Enchanted Kingdom. It's gonna take a lot of energy, but it's worth it…" She turned her gaze to the warzone at the Enchanted Kingdom and grinned.

"NOW!" She blasted herself from the ground, and everyone else followed, leaving behind a devastating boom that sent debris from the bridge flying into the sky like little fragments.

They soared through the orange sky as the smoke of destruction filled the air. Sophia looked down at the Enchanted Kingdom.

Buildings were on fire. Jaylen and Dark Don were teleporting and clashing, while the other Officials joined the fight. Celestianites and Lunaranites were battling to the death—spears flying, energy blasts launching in every direction. She narrowed her eyes at Dark Don—and

then she noticed Incarceration, leading the Lunaranites and fighting the other Celestianites alongside them. He was creating nightmarish creatures that were indescribable, and they went off to attack the Celestianites.

She turned her gaze to the Castle of Celestia. Smoke was escaping from the very top, like a chimney on fire. It was starting to burn down—flames flickering, nearly flooding the entire battlefield.

Then the crew heroically landed right in front of Jaylen and the other Officials fighting against Dark Don. They skidded across the golden floor as explosions rumbled and smoke erupted behind them.

Despite the chaos around them, they never let their guard down. Dark Don had lunar energy crackling around his body. He wore a wide frown as he stared into the heroes' souls. He clenched his fists, gritting his teeth. Blood nearly soaked his body, and the battlefield was smeared with it.

"Isn't this nice? Calling for backup when you really need it," he said, his voice dripping with malice.

"You've actually given me a compliment. I know I'm dangerous…" Everyone got into their fighting stances. "You're not gonna do anything to Celestia—nor take over it!" Coltz exclaimed, green energy crackling around his fists. Dark Don walked toward them, looking like a tired beast.

"Cool, cool…" He tightened his gloves. "I'm just waiting till Incarceration activates the Celestial Pillars. That way, the Power Gems will come to us if needed… I wouldn't even have to search. It'd just be too easy!" "That's just playing dirty," Guervens said, his fists dripping with orange lava and magma. His black wings were battered, but his armor stayed intact. He cracked his knuckles. "We know you, Dark Don. You never play fair…" "You know, maybe you're right. I'm not playing fair," Dark Don said as he charged up his fists with lunar energy.

His eyes turned silver and crackled. "But you guys just make this so hard for me. Why can't I cheat? I've hated Celestianites ever since I was a baby. You might not know the reason why… but once I get all the Power Gems, they'll be gone. Wiped out. For good…"

His wings flared open, and his tail started whipping behind him. "You call yourselves heroes? Show me what a hero can really do…" Everyone

charged up their Elements, some morphing into their beast forms. Jaylen smirked, yellow and cyan radiant energy swirling around his arms. "You betcha…"

Scourge Don walked away, his cape still swaying from left to right, and the moon glistened with light as the stars twinkled across the sky.

Smoke slowly emerged from the rugged ground and from the destruction of fallen buildings and towers. It seemed there was no hope. No hope at all. It seemed that Don was probably just going to stay like this forever—and he was never going to turn back. His friends tried.

All of them did. But it was just no use. Duke narrowed his eyes at the six, then frowned. He looked at all of their sorrowful faces, then turned to Don, who was still walking away. He tried not to feel anything, but that thing started creeping up into his mind like a spider. Was Starla right the entire time? He tried to ignore it, but it just wouldn't go away. What if she was right? All because of one thing: the Lunaranites.

Was he like the Lunaranites? Did he act like them in any way? He was a Celestianite, but he just didn't look like one anymore—not with his condition. Then he turned around and sighed. "I gotta go…" He flew off into the night sky, his thrusters still broken, wings damaged. He looked down at the crew with his bird mask and shook his head, dropped the Power Gems—then he was gone, disappearing into the clouds.

The six looked up, watching Duke leave. They were confused about why he dropped the Power Gems, but at least they got them. Instead of picking them up, Olsen had other plans. "DON!" he shouted. Don stopped and turned to them, his eyes flashing with anger and regret.

"What do you want? Can't I just be alone for once?" he muttered, his voice deep and cold. "It's either fight or flight. We need you… because without you, we aren't the Chosen Ones," Olsen replied as he stepped forward firmly. Don clenched his fists.

"SO WHAT?! NOBODY NEEDS ME! I DON'T CARE ANYMORE,

OLSEN! I've already lost friends—why go back now? The prophecy is too much pressure! I was betrayed after realizing the truth…"

He stared into Olsen's soul. "All of it shall be forgotten… Without me, the prophecy shouldn't exist…" Celestial energy began to crackle around his body like violet electricity. "I might've chosen flight, but this time I'm gonna choose to fight…" Don teleported right in front of Ella and drop kicked her with one leg, sending her flying through a large rock.

She crashed through it as the fragments rained down on her and rolled over her body. Her eyes instantly shut—she was knocked out. Everyone else stared in shock. Then Don turned to Prince and instantly teleported in front of him, uppercutting him into the air before teleporting above him and slamming him down with his tail. Prince hit the ground, sliding across on his back, flipping over.

He crashed through building debris. Everyone else charged into the fight. Don locked his eyes on them as they came closer.

Archie came in first, but Don grabbed his arm, swung him around repeatedly, and threw him across the air.

Eli teleported in front of Don to deliver a Taekwondo sidekick, but Don blocked it and elbow-struck his gut, then right-hooked him away.

Demaurion roared, leaping into the air with his trident. Don grabbed it mid-air and spun Demaurion around before hurling him at Olsen. Demaurion crashed into Olsen, sending them sprawling.

Don walked toward them, fists clenched, gripping the trident hard. "Weak. I could never," he muttered. Eli teleported behind Don and tried to strike him with green energy, but Don teleported behind him, flash-kicked him into the air, then appeared above him and grabbed his body. He soared across the sky with him, smashing through towers and buildings, causing massive destruction. Then he slammed Eli down with extreme force, causing his face to bleed. Don then celestial-struck him, sending his body back to the ground like a green meteor.

Eli crashed chest-first. Don flew down with energy charged up, slamming his foot onto Eli with such force that a celestial shockwave erupted, splitting the buildings. They collapsed and tumbled to the ground.

Demaurion rushed in again, hurling a wave of water at Don. It swirled like a tsunami, then condensed into a high-pressure beam. The battlefield lit up. Archie stood again, his suit battered, holding a blazing fireball in his hand. His hair flailed wildly in the wind.

Don looked at both Demaurion and Archie, then turned to Olsen, who was running at him with his hammer, yelling triumphantly. Prince hovered overhead, ready to strike with lightning, and Ella ran forward with swirling sand around her, hair flailing. Don clenched his fists as celestial energy crackled violently. He grunted—and teleported in front of Olsen, celestial-flash-kicked his chin into the air, then grabbed Ella's back and slammed her into the ground in slow motion, causing a huge celestial explosion and a blinding shockwave that sent everyone flying.

Archie fired the blazing fireball, shouting, "BLAZING HELL!" Don's eyes lit up. He leapt into the air through the fireball, cloaked in celestial energy. The fireball exploded. Don grabbed Archie by the neck and slammed him to the ground. He cracked his own neck, then delivered a devastating celestial punch to Archie's face, creating a land-shattering shockwave.

Mountains split in half and collapsed. Buildings began to tumble and crumble. Dust erupted everywhere. Don teleported above Prince—then shouted, "365 DAYS!" Ten massive glowing celestial fists rained down from the heavens, slamming the crew one by one, shattering the very air like glass. A blinding light exploded outward, creating a shockwave that summoned a hurricane. It pulled buildings apart and shook the Land of Hearts again.

Cracks spread rapidly across the battlefield. Starla held tightly to Scorch on a mountain cave, struggling not to be swept away by the wind. Despite the destruction, the Power Gems remained untouched.

Through the chaos and blinding white explosion, Don teleported right in front of Demaurion—now a blazing black silhouette—screaming as he fired an insane strike to his face. The explosion that followed alone destroyed the entire Land of Hearts. The castle was launched into obliteration as flames burst from the ground. People were burning. Some were dying.

Buildings and towers snapped in half, and mountains crumbled. The white blindness faded. Wind roared across the sky. The land continued to shake like an unending earthquake. And there stood Don—alone—his eyes glowing with corrupted celestial energy, his cape swaying violently in the storm. Olsen finally crash-landed onto the ground after being launched into the air, and he landed on his back right in front of Scourge Don.

Scourge Don marched towards him, celestial energy still crackling violently, then he harshly placed his foot on his chest.

"WHY, OLSEN?! WHY?! WHY SHOULD I TRUST YOU GUYS IF I CAN'T TRUST THE OTHERS?! WHAT'S THE POINT, OLSEN?! WHAT'S THE POINT?!" Don yelled at him, his voice filled with rage and sadness at the same time. "I DON'T GET IT! YOU STILL WANT ME TO COME BACK TO THE TEAM, EVEN THOUGH I ALREADY LEFT IT! IT'S TOO MUCH, AND I CAN'T TAKE IT IF I CAN'T TRUST THEM! YOU DIDN'T HELP ME! YOU DIDN'T HELP ME THE RIGHT WAY! I WANTED TO BECOME SOMEONE ELSE SO I COULD SHOW YOU THAT I'M NOT A CRYBABY! THAT I'M NOT SOME LOSER! THAT I'M NOT A CLOWN! THAT I'M NOT ENTERTAINMENT! I WANNA BE SOMETHING ELSE! AND THEY TOOK THAT AWAY FROM ME! AND YOU DID NOTHING!"

Don sighed as he calmed down, then he slowly lowered his head to turn his gaze to Olsen's eyes. "Tell me, Olsen… what's the point of trusting you if I can't trust them?" Olsen coughed up blood, beaten and bloodied.

It spilled across his face, and he was bleeding from the nose. He coughed again and weakly said, "Because, Don… because that's what best friends do…" He was breathing slowly, looking like he was dying. "We've been friends for six years, Don. Six years… You were my first friend, and I was your first friend… I don't wanna end it here and now, Don. Please…"

Don's angry expression faltered into a small frown. He looked down at Olsen, his hands shaking with regret and confusion.

Olsen was right. They had been through so much. And Don let Incarceration get to him. If he stayed like this, they'd probably never come back from it.

Olsen kept speaking, his voice cracking slightly.

"I know the real you is still in there, Don… I know it. I'll always know it. You can escape Incarceration's manipulation and join us. We can stop the war together after we find the Lost Key…"

"You're the first Chosen One, Don. The first one ever… The only Celestial user in this generation. You're special…" Starla put her hand on Don's shoulder, still injured from the fight with Duke. "He's right, Don. That metaphor I showed you—it was exactly what I was talking about… You have a choice. Do you want to go back, or stay like this?" Don stood in silence, thinking. The real him was pushing its way out, fighting to break free from Incarceration's grip.

He clenched his fists as a single tear slid down his face. Then he collapsed to his knees. In his real voice, soft and shaken, he said while removing his mask, "I want to go back…" Before he could fall any farther, Olsen hugged him tight. Don thought to himself, *Don't cry, don't cry, don't cry, don't cry*! But a small tear rolled down his cheek anyway.

"I miss you all… I'm sorry for what I've done… I love you guys. As friends…" Everyone joined in, wrapping their arms around him, patting each other's backs and comforting one another. Starla stood back, a small smile creeping up on her face. Prince whispered, "We love you too, Don…"

They slowly pulled away from the group hug. Don got up, dusting off his hero suit. Scourge Don was gone.

The real Don was back. Then he noticed something—on the ground, the Power Gems were lying there the whole time. He looked around. "Where's Duke?" he asked. Ella looked up at the sky.

"Duke… he just dropped the Power Gems and left…" Don shook his head. "What about Power?! Is he okay?" "Power's fine. He's just… lost," Olsen muttered under his breath. "He'll find his way, though. Hopefully…"

Then, one of the Power Gems started humming. Everyone turned their attention to it as all nine began to glow and shake, almost like they were alive. Starla looked at them, puzzled, then back up at the mountain where Scorch was. Her eyes widened. "The three Power Gems I had—they're gone?! What's going on?!" Suddenly, the Power Gems levitated into the

air, glowing ominously. All nine grouped up, circling in the air like a ritual. Even the Blushinites and Quewen Relish, from her throne outside, stared up in shock. Archie murmured, "What the hell?"

Then the Power Gems exploded with radiant light, a shockwave blasting across the entirety of Avangard. Everyone saw it—Mr. Bassi at Insane Middle School, the people in Iris Town, the Frozenites and Yetis in Eclitsic. The whole world. Don yelled, his voice cracking, "THE HECK IS GOING ON?!"

The wind grew stronger and wilder as the Power Gems spun faster. They looked like radiant stars orbiting in the night sky.

Then, the blue Power Gem placed itself in the center. The winds turned hostile. The ground began to quake violently.

"ALRIGHT, WE GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE!" Demaurion shouted, eyes darting around. Then in an instant, the Power Gems collided—BOOM—a massive rainbow-colored shockwave exploded across all of Avangard. Sparks shot out like fireworks. The sky lit up. The land shook. Everyone's eyes widened. The energy raced across the ground like a tsunami.

"WOAH!" everybody shouted in unison, leaping over it. It struck everything—objects began morphing.

Lunaranites began erupting from the ground. The Uragas in the air? They transformed into alien hover-jets, slimy and mechanical, with blasters and teeth. It was disgusting, unreal, indescribable.

Everyone drew their weapons. Lunaranites launched at them, jaws wide, ready to pierce skin. A flock of Lunaranite dragons swarmed through the sky, spreading across Avangard. Alien ships opened fire on structures all across the tribes. Don gritted his teeth, drawing his daggers as he stared at the sky—now flooded with Lunaranites and destruction. Starla's dragon ears twitched. Her instincts fired off like alarms. "I knew this would happen… Someone activated the Power Gem Pillars. They can now control the Power Gems and bring them to Celestia. Something's happening over there." Olsen slammed his fists together.

"Oh, so something's going on at Celestia? BET!" "LET'S GET STARTED!"

"THIS IS GONNA BE FUN!" "ALRIGHT, THE TEAM'S BACK AT IT AGAIN!" Archie shouted, his fists igniting in blazing orange flames. Don launched into the air, yelling, "I'LL GET DREADIXZ! YOU GUYS STOP WHATEVER'S HAPPENING AT CELESTIA! I THINK IT'S THE LUNARANITES—GO, GO, GO!"

He transformed into full dragon mode, tearing through the flock of Lunaranites like they were paper. The others scattered, racing toward Celestia. And that's how the Scourge Don Arc ends…

CH.33 Battle of the Kings!: DON VS KING DREADIXZ!

I soared through the air, wings spread wide like a storm about to crash. Locking eyes with that alien bird, I smirked, "Oh, this is gonna be *fire*…" I twisted left midair, celestial flames sparking from my gaze, blazing like twin suns.

Remember the book? The Power Gems—pulled by the pillars like a magnet—summoning monstrous abominations. But that ends now.

I unleashed a colossal radiant beam slicing through the sky, vaporizing one of the birds in a violet explosion that painted the clouds. I weaved through the million-strong flock, firing blasts and piercing claws through them with savage grace. Blood rained down like a dark symphony as I slashed through the swarm, flipping and twisting like a celestial ninja.

Morphing back to my regular form, wings beating wildly, celestial energy crackled like lightning around me. I shot forward with a cocky grin.

"COME AND GET THIS!" I roared, shooting through the crowd like a lightning bolt. I drifted in midair, flames erupting off my body like a burning comet, fists clenched in pure pride.

Charging with every ounce of energy, I grabbed a bird by the neck, slammed it into another, then backhanded a third to the ground like it was nothing. I zigzagged through the swarm at lightspeed, kicking, slashing, launching aerial assaults that left the air thick with blood and smoke.

Backing up, violet flames roared, wrapping my arms like living chains. My eyes flashed pure white—the symbol *KX* burning in my pupils.

I snapped my fingers. Arms crossed. My glare pierced the souls of the monstrous flock.

"Let's dance."

I teleported right in front of one, smashing its skull before teleporting again to uppercut another. Slammed one into a rival, spun to elbow strike another, then hammered them with celestial fists that sent meteors crashing to the earth.

They swarmed, but I was a hurricane of fury—kicking, smashing, using their own bodies as weapons, a wild maniac in flight.

Then I soared higher, eyes blazing violet, and crossed my legs, ready for the grand finale.

I fell like a comet, purple flames igniting at my feet, the air trembling with power. Time slowed.

"VIOLET!"

My feet slammed into the flock with the force of an explosion.

"INSANITY!!!"

A shockwave burst out, ripping through the sky like a scythe, shredding alien birds into bloody mist. The air shattered, their screams drowned in the roar of destruction as blood rained down like a savage storm.

I hovered, scanning the carnage, then transformed—Celestial Dragon form, slicing through clouds like a tidal wave.

Below, the ocean darkened under the orange sky. Closer and closer I flew toward King Dreadixz's domain—an ominous shadow land called Foreshade.

The island stretched wide, a kingdom of black towers and jagged rocks, forests of dead trees beneath a sky bruised purple and black.

Moonlight gleamed off jet-black spires, purple sigils glowing faintly. The air was thick with menace.

This was Lunaranite territory. The heart of darkness.

Ahead stood a towering dark castle, rivaling Celestia's own throne, its great stone bridge sealed tight by thick chains.

I shook my head in disbelief—locked doors? What, scared of a kid?

I rolled my eyes and did what any responsible 12-year-old Celestianite

would do:

"CELESTIAL STRIKE!"

My fists slammed the portcullis, celestial energy exploding in a blinding blast that shattered the gate wide open. I stepped through, cool as ice, and locked eyes with Dreadixz.

He barely glanced up from admiring his sword—then caught sight of me with a lazy smirk.

"Well, isn't this a *surprising* visit?"

"Surprising? News flash: I was coming."

He rose with a clatter of armor, snapping his fingers with each deliberate step.

"Oh, how I'd love to watch a Celestianite boy try to topple me… but we both know how this ends."

The red scar blazing on his eye flickered, and I noticed his tail—bones exposed at the tip. What hell had that been through?

Igniting his sword in dark flames, he sneered, "You dare challenge me, Lens Don? You've come far… but you're still nothing."

Fear crawled up my spine, but I shoved it down. I wasn't here to lose. I was KX—the future Leader of the Celestianites.

I've faced monsters: King Scar, Glacier Loose, Leviathan, Incarceration, Hydra, even my alternate self.

I'm not backing down.

"I'm not scared of you." My voice was ice and fire.

He smirked, fists clenched. "Atta boy."

We both launched at each other, full throttle — so fast the shockwave from our clash ripped the castle clean in half. Our arms locked, muscles screaming as we pushed like titans. I threw him a smirk, then slammed a brutal right hook into his jaw.

Next, I flash-kicked him skyward — *hard.* He crashed through the roof like a wrecking ball. I boosted up after him, circling in the stormy sky. Then, like lightning, we charged again, colliding with the force of a supernova.

He threw a savage knee, then grabbed my head and hurled me like a

ragdoll across the air. I shook it off mid-flight. He charged again — a face strike, then a powerful uppercut launching me higher.

He grabbed my leg, spiraled us downward, crashing me through a massive tower. The impact shook the ground beneath us.

I locked in, flash-kicked him back to the dirt, then tornado-kicked him skyward. He blasted off fast — I matched him, a streak of white light tearing through clouds like a comet.

Punch to the gut. Spin. Aerial kick sending him airborne again. I blasted toward him, snatched his head, threw him down, then dashed through him at the speed of celestial light.

Teleporting right in front, I slammed my fist into his chest — sent him flying like a meteor crashing into the earth with a purple explosion. I landed with him, feet smashing down hard.

Before I could strike again, he grabbed my fists, spun up, and slammed me into the ground. He twisted, rained punches — left hook, right hook, backhand — then grabbed my head and smashed it onto a rock.

He reeled back, punched my gut so hard it shot me into the sky like a shooting star.

Teleporting in front, he axe-kicked me mid-air, then popped up beneath me to strike my gut again — launching me sideways.

Above me now, he slammed me down with brutal force. I rattled across the ground like a spinning wheel, crashing through six buildings or more. I backflipped, skidding to a dusty stop.

I looked up — he was already hurtling toward me, a dark Superman ready to crush.

His landing shook the earth like thunder. I got launched skyward, only for him to grab my neck.

"I'm not done yet," he growled.

Shadow-slammed fist into my cheek, sending me flying. He followed mid-air, snatched me, rolled, and slammed me into the ground again.

He got up, threw me across the field, teleported in front, and bombarded my gut with punches — followed by a sweeping tornado kick.

I flew to the edge of the sky; he chased like a relentless predator.

I tried to fight back, locking in, but he was too much — spinning around, I blasted myself at him, fists charged with celestial energy.

Our punches collided, unleashing raw power that cracked the air. I hit him hard in the face; he backhanded me, but I answered with a double uppercut.

He shrugged it off, slammed his fists into my chest, pain erupting through me. Uppercut. Strike. I soared back up.

He grabbed me, flipped, and dove earthward, body slamming me so hard the ground cracked and chunks of debris exploded into the sky.

Then he punched me into the air, teleported behind, grabbed my neck, and blasted through buildings — using me as a battering ram.

He shattered a bridge with our collision, punched me left, aerial punched right, then lunar-punched my cheekbone — sending me spiraling.

He teleported behind me, twirled, and fired off a reckless, bone-crushing lunar punch that nearly ended me.

Sent flying like a rocket, he zoomed after me, repeating a relentless left-right combo, then grabbed my neck and slammed me through another building, pulverizing it.

Charging lunar energy, he hurled me into rubble.

I crashed, tumbling wildly.

He slammed both fists into my chest, sending out a shockwave that tore across Foreshade. Buildings split, shattered, architecture exploded into the air like fireworks.

Bloodied and battered, I staggered to my feet, fists clenched.

"I'm still not done," I growled.

"Still not done? You'll be finished before you know it," he sneered.

Mid-air, he unleashed a brutal overhand punch, spinning me like a mad top.

Then a double backhand to my face, sharp jabs mid-air, and a savage side kick that twisted into a tornado kick, crashing into my torso — sending me plummeting.

He caught up, blitzing through clouds, tossing me like a ragdoll, then decked me in the chest and face repeatedly — combo after combo.

Teleporting with precision, he hammered me from every angle, a shadow storm of destruction.

We boomeranged back to Foreshade, his relentless assault ragdolling me through the air, punches never ceasing.

Suddenly, he warped us to the Gadian Sea, diving underwater like a torpedo, gripping my neck tight.

Air fading, I gasped — he smashed through a ship like paper.

Boom. Back in Foreshade skies.

Another savage punch sent me reeling: hit after hit, lights flickering in my vision.

Then the grand finale: The Lunaranite Knuckle Sandwich.

I took the hit with a grin — it yeeted me into space, past clouds, atmosphere, into the starry void.

But he wasn't done.

Teleporting above like a vengeful god, he slammed me down with both fists, crashing me to Earth like a flaming meteor.

The impact wasn't just a hit — it was a roaring explosion, a shockwave that flattened land, cracked the sky, and reshaped the battlefield like sand in the wind.

He appeared before me, hands on hips, cape flowing.

I looked up, bloodied, torn suit revealing my battered chest, hands twitching.

I coughed blood.

He crouched, voice low:

"You think you're the hero? Prove it."

The Hero... of Avangard.

His words hit deep.

I had to fight harder, be stronger. This was my prophecy — to stop the Lunaranites, to lead the Celestianites.

I. AM. LENS DON. THE CELESTIANITE KING.

Fists clenched, I heard the Celestial Gods and Zeniths chanting, their voices filling me with unbreakable spirit.

Quietly, I whispered,

"This time, I'm not playing games."

I clenched so hard reality shook.

My eyes erupted in celestial energy, violet flames consuming me, *KX* burning bright in my gaze.

"NO!" I bellowed, voice thunderous.

Dreadixz lunged, but I grabbed his fists effortlessly — confusion flashed in his eyes.

White cracks shattered the air like glass, the earth trembling.

"YOU WILL NOT DEFEAT ME! NEVER! BOW NOW!" I screamed in fury.

The world warped, glitching into a celestial realm of dark purple and white, flashing wildly.

I went feral, chaotic.

Punches rained — left, right, over and over — lightning-fast, savage strikes.

"AHHHHHHHHHHH!" I roared, relentless fury pouring into every blow.

Light exploded, blinding him so utterly he couldn't see my fists battering his face.

I hammered, faster than sight could follow, punches detonating like fireworks.

His cries for mercy drowned beneath the blinding storm.

The light wasn't just bright — it was *blinding light.*

I shattered him with my final punch — a colossal, blinding explosion that rippled across Avangard, shaking reality to its core.

Planets realigned. Foreshade crumbled.

When the dust settled, I knelt in the crater's heart, breathing heavy.

Dreadixz lay broken, face smashed beyond recognition.

With my tail, I pierced his heart.

The nightmare was over.

I looked up to the night sky, bloodied and exhausted, and sighed —

"Finally…"

CH.34 War Means All

Incarceration stood dead center among the nine towering pillars, the ground beneath him gleaming like molten gold. Outside, chaos screamed—explosions, clashing armies, the roar of war—but inside the Room of Zeniths, he was in his element.

Perched atop a towering golden spire beside Celestia's longest tower, he was surrounded by shimmering yellow pillars that glowed like captured stars. Along the walls, statues of the nine Zeniths stood shoulder to shoulder, silent sentinels of power.

His eyes locked onto the Power Gems, distant yet pulling toward him like magnets charged with raw energy. He smirked—vicious, knowing. "My work here is done…" he said, voice cold as he phased through the golden arc-shaped door.

Out on the tower's edge, arms spread wide, he laughed—a menacing bellow that cut through the war's thunderous chaos below.

Explosions ripped buildings apart. Celestianites and Lunaranites clashed, spears stabbing, swords slicing, the air thick with rage and destruction.

"This is what dominance *feels* like! HAHAHAHAHA!!!" His voice echoed across Celestia, shaking the battlefield like a storm.

His eyes flared a deeper red, soaked in destructive lust.

"In minutes… or maybe hours, the Power Gems will be *mine*…"

"I'll be King of the Lunaranites… and rule Celestia and Foreshade for *eternity!*" he roared, pride dripping from every word.

A sharp shout cut through the hall.

"Hey!"

Incarceration spun, spotting his challengers: Krane and Overbrawl.

"Oh, isn't that *great?* I thought you gave up. Yet here you are, still desperate to kick my ass," he sneered, weapon drawn, stalking toward them like a predator.

"You should've stayed in bed," he added, voice icy.

Overbrawl's fists clenched, excitement crackling. "OH YEAH! Ready to kill a Zenith! This is gonna be *legendary,* right Krane?"

Krane's eyes burned with spiritual and thermal energy, fists glowing. "Like you always say, Overbrawl—'a sure fire kill.'"

"I like brave kids," Incarceration smirked darkly. "Come on."

In an instant, he dashed at Krane with blinding speed. Krane met him head-on, their fists colliding with a whiplash shockwave that rattled the entire tower.

Overbrawl boosted into the fray, tackling Incarceration out of the building with explosive force. They plummeted, exchanging brutal punches mid-air.

Incarceration flipped back, blitzed forward, and slammed Overbrawl into the ground like a water bottle tossed aside. Overbrawl crashed through a building and shattered the earth beneath him in a meteor-like explosion.

Incarceration's landing sent a shockwave roaring, but Krane was already charging, landing a brutal combo—left hook, right hook, backhand, knee strike—before grabbing Incarceration's head and slamming it into his knee.

Incarceration spun free, karate-kicked Krane into the sky, and Overbrawl teleported behind him, setting off random explosions.

Incarceration danced through the blasts like a ghost, then spin-kicked Overbrawl airborne.

Krane rushed in with a punch, only to be blocked and slammed hard into the shattered ground.

Pain ripped through Krane's back as Incarceration grabbed his leg and spun him like a weapon, hurling him across the battlefield.

Krane tumbled like a lightning bolt before crashing through a building.

Overbrawl teleported behind Incarceration, throwing a punch, but Incarceration caught his arm and punched his gut, sending him rocketing skyward.

Refusing defeat, Overbrawl curled into a blazing orange ball and shot down like a meteor, crashing into Incarceration with a colossal shockwave that sent friend and foe flying.

Incarceration shrugged off the blast.

Krane appeared behind him, throwing a sneaky punch—only to have both their heads slammed together like wrecking balls.

He kicked Krane twice into the air, phased behind Overbrawl, and spun with a red explosion punch that sent Overbrawl soaring.

Krane spiritual-punched Incarceration into the air and followed up.

Their mid-air clash was a celestial dance of destruction—spinning, striking, each blow shaking the clouds.

Incarceration landed a brutal elbow to Krane's head, grabbed his leg, spun him around, and hurled him through the clouds.

Teleporting in front, he hammered Krane's face with fists blazing red with nightmare flames.

The barrage continued—punches and kicks pounding Krane's face and gut.

Incarceration grabbed Krane's head and boosted downward, smashing him into the heart of a bustling city.

A black shockwave exploded from Incarceration's fists, sending cars and trains flying, tearing apart golden buildings with devastating force.

He lifted Krane, voice cold as ice:

"Is that all you've got? Because there's *more* where that came from."

Smoke choked the air, mingling with the echoes of war — the roars of Lunaranites and Celestianites tearing into each other. The ground, once golden and pristine, now ruptured and blackened, a brutal testament to the destruction raging all around.

Dark Don slowly turned his head, eyes lifting to the sky. The orange blaze shifted to a heavy, ominous gray. Thunder rumbled, lightning slashed across the clouds—and his smirk stretched wider, wicked as nightmarish beasts and rabid Lunaranites rained down like meteors, crashing into the earth with brutal force.

Millions poured in, rolling and sprinting toward him with terrifying speed.

He glanced back at his crew, cool and confident.

"Guess I'll see you guys later. Don't worry, maybe we'll get a chance to fight…"

His smirk deepened.

"Incarceration needs me. You kids handle this mob while I'm gone."

Before anyone could react, he vanished—teleporting away in an instant, leaving the crew standing amidst the chaos.

The war cries echoed endlessly, the battlefield a maelstrom of fire, blood, and desperation. Buildings burned, their flames flickering violently, smoke thickening the sky as the ground turned to ash.

They stood firm, surrounded by billions of beasts rushing at them, the sky alive with flying Lunaranites and Celestianites hurling spears and bullets. Blood rained down like a dark storm.

Jaylen's gaze dropped to the ground—his eyes locked on a single drop of blood falling on his hand. Fists clenched.

"We fight together till the end…" he said, steady and sure.

"WHAT?!" Kayson shouted, sprinting toward him.

"Are you sure about this? There's *so many*—I don't know if we can handle them all!"

"We *can* do this, guys! I *know* we can!" Jaylen shot back, fierce.

"I'm part of the Celestianite Officials. I keep people safe from disasters like this. We work *together* — and end this, *once and for all.*"

The team rallied, powers surging, weapons ready. Their eyes narrowed, locking on the oncoming horde.

Jaylen unsheathed his dual-bladed golden sword, cyan energy crackling around the blades.

"*We* are gonna become Heroes of Avangard… GO!"

With battle cries blazing, they charged into the fray.

Guervens unleashed a massive magma explosion, waves of molten fury melting beasts into nothingness, leaving scorched earth in their wake.

Jaylen ascended, soaring over the chaos as the others unleashed their elemental might.

Fedjina, in Falcon form, streaked through the sky, firing golden beams that erupted into explosions, incinerating enemies effortlessly.

Jocabed summoned furious snowstorms, freezing hundreds in their tracks.

Emely blanketed the battlefield in ice, shattering over 600 foes with ruthless precision.

Ryan tore through the crowd on wheel skates, missiles and bullets raining down. Explosions grew thunderous with every blast.

He leapt, shouting, "IT'S DOOMSDAY, BABY!!!" Sliding, flipping, and firing simultaneously, scattering enemies like ragdolls.

Sophia slammed her palms down, sending shockwaves and sound blasts that shattered ground and beast alike, knocking foes to their doom.

Pink explosions, golden eruptions, magma and missile blasts combined into a symphony of destruction.

William soared in Pterodactyl form, then shifted mid-flight, charging through enemies with a gale-force wall of air pressure.

He flapped, sending a shockwave that tore through buildings and crushed beasts like insects.

Alien birds swirled overhead, morphing wings into cannons and missile launchers.

Jaylen transformed, scales shimmering gold, cyan wings sparkling with dreamy yellow stones—his Dreamy Dragon form.

He dived into the aerial battle, firing energy beams, spinning through

flocks, slashing with his dual blades.

Fedjina and Emely joined, blasting beams of gold and ice, freezing alien birds mid-flight, their bodies cracking and falling broken to earth.

Side by side, they rained destruction from the sky.

Jaylen smirked at Fedjina: "Keep firing—these birds won't last long."

They locked in, firing and freezing flock after flock.

Jaylen soared beneath the swarm, then surged behind, unleashing a massive golden-cyan beam that exploded across the sky in radiant bursts.

The clash of explosions, roars of war, cries of pain and determination, and collapsing buildings formed a brutal, chaotic symphony.

Then, it hit Jaylen—the source of the beasts: the Power Gems.

Incarceration must've triggered the Celestial Pillars to pull them closer.

Now, they were about to be used to conquer Celestia—maybe worse, with Dark Don's help.

Through gray, smoke-choked clouds, Jaylen searched the city below. Flames licked nearly every building, smoke billowed from shattered windows, and structures crumbled.

The Enchanted Kingdom was on the brink of domination.

At the heart stood the golden castle—scarred but unyielding.

Jaylen charged toward the city, knowing he had to stop the Celestial Pillars… fast.

Meanwhile, Incarceration charged his fists with dark energy, striking Krane's face hard enough to send him flying across the cracked golden road.

Cars overturned, screams pierced the chaos—innocents caught in the crossfire.

Krane crashed through destruction and debris, struggling to stay conscious.

Incarceration teleported behind, gripping Krane's neck.

"Not done yet," he hissed, lifting both into the air before hurling Krane down like a meteor.

Incarceration soared, arms wrapping around Krane for a vicious body

slam.

They plunged like red and purple shooting stars, swirling through clouds as Incarceration pummeled Krane relentlessly.

Spectators watched, stunned by the brutal spectacle.

Just before impact, Overbrawl teleported beside Incarceration, a blazing orange blur delivering a tornado kick that sent him tumbling through smoky skies.

Incarceration crashed through a golden building, smashing into a truck trailer filled with oil—an explosion roared, blasting him away.

He landed hard, blood trickling, nightmare energy flickering in his eyes.

"You—how could you save him?" Incarceration snarled.

"Aren't you guys villains?"

Krane, bloodied but smirking, rose slowly.

"Even villains have hearts," Overbrawl said, fists clenched with fierce determination.

"So… you two are *gay* for each other?" Incarceration teased, arms crossed.

Both froze, blushing furiously.

Krane's face shifted from red to purple as he shook his head, locking in.

"I—I'll just kill you already. Ready, Overbrawl?"

Overbrawl nodded.

"Let's get his ass."

Incarceration looked up, smirking wide.

"That's how I like it. You really want to stop the destruction I'm causing?"

His tail flicked slowly.

"Looks great, doesn't it?"

Suddenly, Incarceration's eyes locked on Krane's watch strapped to his wrist—the key.

With a sinister grin, he snatched the watch mid-air, his black Zenith arm pixelating as nanobots swarmed over it, reshaping into a deadly weapon.

Krane's eyes went wide, jaw dropping like he just saw a ghost. "Yo, *not* my watch, bro!" he gasped, fists clenching tight.

His mind raced—*That watch isn't just an accessory. It's my power link, my*

edge. If Incarceration's got it... this just got real.

But Krane wasn't about to let that slide.

His expression hardened, eyes blazing fierce determination.

"No way you're turning that against us," he growled through gritted teeth, muscles tensing for the next move.

Then Incarceration slammed his palm on the watch, activating the hidden mechanisms.

Nanobots raced, transforming his arm into a double-edged steel sword pulsing with red veins.

His other arm morphed into a black steel cannon, glowing ominously.

His eyes flared brighter red.

"Oh… I guess it's time."

"Now that I've synced with Krane's watch and activated the pillars, everyone's gonna think I'm the true Power Gem owner."

He leapt skyward, hovering above Overbrawl and Krane.

"Don't worry—I won't forget about you," he whispered.

Krane's fists clenched, fury burning.

"This isn't over," he snarled. "Not by a long shot."

Jaylen - I ran across the battlefield, my sneakers barely keeping up with the madness around me. Buildings were on the ground, snapped and crumbled into pieces, some were piled up like someone got way too aggressive playing Jenga. I was in my human form, not even running faster than usual, which — honestly — was SO not the move right now. I had to dodge all of the rumbling explosions and Lunaranites throwing spears at me like they were playing dodgeball and I was the ball. An explosion literally jumped at me and I screamed like a kid getting sprayed with cold water, flying to the side just in time to dodge it. I jumped over a thrown Lunaranite — poor guy was dead — and then I rolled over another Lunaranite mid-run, starting to pick up speed, now running at excellent speeds if I do say so myself. (Thank you, adrenaline, you the real MVP.) I moved to the side and slid over a large building that was towered down to the side, dust flying everywhere. I side-flipped over a spear like I was

auditioning for "Battlefield Olympics" and slid over a Lunaranite fireball on my knees, my pants screaming in agony, before rolling and popping right back into full sprint mode. Up ahead, there was a large blue energy beam emerging right from the tip of the Celestia Castle, stabbing straight up into the air. It was beautiful, it was dangerous, and it was exactly what I needed. I smirked. "Jackpot," I muttered under my breath.

I kept running through the raging battlefield, the ground shaking beneath me, explosions lighting up the sky like it was doomsday's Fourth of July. I ducked and weaved between Lunaranites and Celestianites going at it like cats and dogs, jumping over the remains of demolished buildings like this was some kind of nightmare obstacle course. Then — BAM — Dark Don landed right in front of me. Right smack in the empty middle of the battlefield. He hit the ground so hard it created a massive shockwave that blasted me backwards like I was nothing but a ragdoll. I rolled on my back, instinct kicking in before my brain even caught up, and I backflipped right back into my position. I clenched my fists, gripping my sword, gritting my teeth. "Alright, alright," I muttered, shaking my head and locking my eyes onto Dark Don. Focus time. No jokes. No games. Only hands.

CH.35 Oh Well,

The seven of them sprinted through the burning orange sky, chasing a way toward Celestia. They raced up a tall, jagged green hill, sharp rocks jutting out like nature's own spikes. The whole place looked like a mountain's wild cousin, shadowed by swirling dark clouds ready to burst.

They bolted across that steep slope at breakneck speed—honestly, probably none of them knew exactly where they were headed.

Above, alien Uragas screeched and squawked, their cannon-tipped wings slicing through the air like flying war machines.

"ALRIGHT, WHO THE HECK ARE YOU?!" Olsen shouted, eyes locked on Starla.

Her hair whipped wildly as she dashed, shaking her head. "I'll explain everything—just follow me!"

So they did, chasing her higher up the mountain as the sun crept over the horizon. The sky was crowded with alien birds, black as scattered olives, buzzing with deadly intent.

Suddenly, Starla stopped, hearing a piercing growl echo from the distance. The group froze, eyes darting left and right.

Over the hill, a Lunaranite appeared—not a soldier, but one of those wild, summoned dragons fueled by the Power Gems, completely mindless and dangerous.

Nearby was a jagged stone—Starla's command was quick: "Behind that rock. Now."

They pressed backs to the cold stone, some crouching, some standing,

silence locked with fingers pressed to lips. The growls multiplied—one, two, then a whole chorus.

Prince whispered, "There's more?"

Olsen rolled his eyes, deadpan, "Of course there's more. What do you think, genius?!"

Archie raised an eyebrow. "Alright, now who *are* you really?"

Before Starla could answer, Demaurion's temper flared at the growls, but Ella calmed him just in time.

Then, the sharp sound of a talon scraping the ground approached.

Their hearts pounded like bass drums.

A Lunaranite's head slowly peeked around the rock, scanning—anywhere but at them.

Quiet breaths held tight.

Just as the beast turned to leave—

"TAKE THIS, YOU PIECE OF MONSTROSITY!" Archie roared, launching himself forward.

His fists ignited in bright flames, slamming into the beast's face and sending it flying backward with a fiery explosion.

Smoke curled from his fists as he casually blew it off, hands on hips.

"Well, that wasn't so hard. I was waiting for you guys to finally do something."

"YOU IDIOT! THERE'S A WHOLE FLOCK OVER THERE!" Ella snapped, glaring up the hill.

Archie's eyes flicked to the ten or so Lunaranites armed with spears, claws ready.

"Oh, shoot."

A roar erupted, and they charged.

Archie tackled by one, tumbling and trading blows as they rolled down the hill like wild tumbleweeds.

Above, the others leapt into battle.

Olsen swung his hammer, sending one Lunaranite flying before spinning to knock another out cold.

Demaurion whipped his trident, slashing through the enemy with fierce

precision.

Ella fired sandballs, exploding into choking dust clouds that suffocated the beasts.

From the sky, yellow and cyan radiant stars rained down—Starla herself.

Meanwhile, Archie slammed his opponent into the ground with a massive body slam, causing a boom that ended that Lunaranite.

Explosions, elemental powers, and flashes lit the thunderous battlefield.

More Lunaranites surged—claws, slashes, and tail-whips coming fast.

They struggled—until Archie shot up, soaring 50 feet high.

"ALRIGHT, GUYS! TIME TO END THIS!" he yelled.

He formed a fiery orange bomb, hurling it toward the enemies.

The bomb rolled like a flaming cylinder, beeping ominously.

Smiles spread among the fighters—but then the bomb veered toward the hill's edge.

It bounced off a rock, launched skyward, and smacked Archie's head before tumbling toward the heroes.

The beep sped up.

Olsen smashed at it with his hammer—only to burn himself.

Ella frantically clawed it—making it beep faster.

Archie's heroic grin flipped to a deadpan frown.

"Ah, fu—" (BOOM!)

The fiery explosion sent them all sprawling, weapons and pride dropped.

Olsen groaned, shaking his head.

"Bro, seriously? ARE YOU SERIOUS RIGHT NOW?!"

Silent Eli just stared.

Demaurion, marked with burns, stabbed his trident into the ground, glaring up.

"You've really done it this time."

"Sorry," Archie muttered sheepishly.

Prince brushed off ashes as his burns faded.

"Oh great, now my cat ears are dusty," Ella grumbled as her ears wilted.

"Don't forget my wings!" Starla flapped hers back to normal.

Archie landed, ruffling his hair.

"Well, at least the Lunaranites are dead."

They looked around—the battlefield littered with fallen beasts, blood soaking the grass red.

Starla's eyes scanned beyond the hill.

Musicia—the once vibrant city of golden and pink towers and the slender castle of Queen Soundzwave—was a war zone.

Alien Uragas fired relentlessly, toppling buildings, screams echoing.

Lunaranites tore through streets, dark flames consuming all.

Alien birds blasted architecture with cannons, reducing the city to ruins beneath swirling shadow clouds.

Buildings crumbled with a deafening crash.

Starla blinked, then looked up at the castle's tippy top.

A golden bridge stretched skyward, piercing the storm with crackling lightning.

"We've got to do something," she whispered.

"Exactly why are we heading to Celestia?" Prince asked, standing beside her.

Starla stared, entranced, then shook her head as the vision vanished.

"Because someone's activated the Celestial Pillars. The Power Gems are on their way."

"If we don't act fast, Celestia—and all of Avangard—could be lost."

"It could be Incarceration, Dark Don, Dreadixz, or some other villain."

She squared her shoulders.

"I'm Starla, Celestianite Princess, and I'm stopping this war."

"We have to get there before the Power Gems reach the Pillars. And I know exactly how."

Flames blazed from wreckage to wreckage, roaring louder than the clashing armies echoing in the distance. Smoke smothered the air, the sky locked in endless gray—no light left in Celestia.

Dark Don stood with his fists clenched, a wicked grin pulling at his face as he stared directly into Jaylen's soul. Jaylen's expression stayed solid: serious, locked-in, his jaw tight, brows furrowed.

Their energies crackled, cyan and yellow colliding with silver and white, building toward something inevitable.

Dark Don chuckled under his breath. "Your attitude sure flips quick when things get heated. That's great for you…"

Jaylen rolled his eyes slowly. "Things aren't about to be great for you."

And with that, they clashed.

A blinding burst of silver, cyan, and yellow energy erupted as they collided. Jaylen teleported behind Dark Don, snapping a hard aerial kick that sent him rocketing into the sky.

But Dark Don recovered mid-air, twisting into a crackling lunar sphere and hurling himself downward like a meteor. He slammed into the earth with a shockwave that ripped the ground in half.

Jaylen sprinted in, weaving through city debris like a comet, flipping over rubble at light speed. He dropkicked Dark Don mid-charge, blasting him across the land in a pulse of cyan energy.

Dark Don landed hard, skidding, then bolted forward. Lunar energy surged as he struck Jaylen's gut, then followed with a sharp hook to the face, a left jab, then a brutal backhand that sent Jaylen flying skyward.

Jaylen flipped through the smoke—then Dark Don appeared right in front of him.

Jaylen reacted fast, drawing his sword in a flash of cyan and yellow dream energy. No words, no names—he simply swung, slicing clean through the air, forcing Dark Don to block with both arms. Sparks and light ignited the sky.

Still, Dark Don pushed through, slamming a punch into Jaylen's chest and knocking him downward. Jaylen landed, rolling, but didn't slow—he was already back on his feet, sword in hand.

He dashed forward like a shooting star, slicing with pinpoint strikes—one, two, three. Dream energy traced the edges of each cut. Dark Don parried them with lunar-charged fists, blocking left, right, up, but Jaylen

wasn't letting up.

Jaylen flipped behind him mid-air, striking Dark Don across the face with the blade's glowing edge, then slammed a fist into his back, sending him spinning.

They hit the ground together, kicking up dirt and shockwaves. Dark Don swung a wild right hook—Jaylen ducked it, his sword cutting an arc across Dark Don's arm, sparks flying.

"VICIOUS LUNAR!" Dark Don roared, grabbing Jaylen and slamming him down, cracking the earth beneath.

He yanked Jaylen back up, fists flying in a relentless storm—punches, knees, kicks, too fast to track. Jaylen's sword flickered as he blocked as many as he could, gritting his teeth.

Then Dark Don spun for a Lunar Punch, but Jaylen raised his blade again, blocking the hit with a flash of cyan-yellow energy.

Jaylen glared, locked in.

Then—BAM—teleport.

Jaylen reappeared behind him, backhanding Dark Don mid-air, sending him flipping. Jaylen shot above him with a glowing fist, roaring, "DREAM'S DESCEND!"

His punch landed, blasting Dark Don back to earth in a shockwave of cyan and silver.

Jaylen followed, teleporting again—this time aiming his palm forward.

"BRIGHTENING HEAVENS!"

A swirling beam of dream energy spiraled from his hand, lighting up the entire battlefield as it shot toward Dark Don.

Dark Don recovered fast, slamming both fists to the ground and triggering a massive lunar explosion. The two energies collided in mid-air, merging into a single colossal burst that spread outward in rings, warping the clouds themselves.

Smoke swallowed the sky.

Both stood again, breathing heavy. Jaylen's sword glowed, held firm at his side, still crackling with dream energy. He wasn't backing down.

Jaylen charged again, clashing with Dark Don in a flash. They teleported

mid-combat, soaring through the air, punches and slashes traded at light speed. Jaylen sliced across Dark Don's shoulder, energy flaring. Dark Don retaliated with an uppercut to the chin, grabbing Jaylen and launching them both through a collapsing building.

Mid-air, Jaylen flipped his sword around, cutting a bright arc behind him, forcing Dark Don to block. Jaylen followed up with an overhand strike to Dark Don's back, flipping him downward.

They both landed hard, the ground splitting beneath them.

Jaylen stepped forward, wiping blood from his mouth. His voice dropped low.

"You know what… That's it."

Cyan and yellow dream energy erupted around him in pillars, swirling like fire. His sword pulsed, feeding off the energy. Dark Don tensed, eyes burning white, fists clenching.

"You sure you wanna go like this?" Dark Don asked, voice calm but deadly.

Jaylen's gaze hardened. "Oh, I'm sure."

He stomped, sending rocks flying, energy swirling tighter.

"COME ON!!!"

Dark Don launched forward like a bullet, lunar energy bursting from him.

Jaylen did the same.

Their fists collided—BOOM—reality cracked. Buildings shook, the sky flashed black and white.

In the chaos, they circled each other mid-air again, weaving strikes, teleporting blow after blow. Jaylen's sword flashed between punches, cutting arcs of dreamlight through the air. He slashed twice, then fired a blast from the blade itself—forcing Dark Don back.

But Dark Don wasn't slowing down. He swung back in, pummeling Jaylen with blow after blow—face, chest, gut.

Jaylen countered, slicing upward with his blade, cutting through a chunk of Dark Don's aura, splitting it like mist.

But Dark Don grabbed Jaylen's arm, spinning him wildly through the

air and hurling him like a meteor.

Jaylen twisted mid-fall, eyes scanning the sky, and saw white glowing eyes above him—Dark Don again.

Before Jaylen could react, Dark Don kicked him down, slamming him into the ground. A massive boom rippled across the land.

Jaylen coughed hard, struggling to rise. Dark Don landed, cracking his knuckles, then slammed another punch into Jaylen's face.

Blood sprayed.

Jaylen clenched his sword tighter, but his strength was fading. His body shook.

"So sad," Dark Don muttered, smashing him again.

"Really sad."

Another punch. More blood. Jaylen gritted his teeth, his vision blurring.

Dark Don lifted him by the neck and vanished into the sky, teleporting high above the clouds.

Jaylen floated alone, gasping for air, panicked eyes searching.

Suddenly—Dark Don appeared in front of him again, lunar fist crashing into Jaylen's face, sending him spiraling like a ragdoll through the clouds.

Another teleport.

A vicious gut punch.

Then a hook. Another. An uppercut. An overhand.

Dark Don spun at light speed, looking like a lunar Beyblade, hurling Jaylen toward the last standing building.

Jaylen crashed straight through it, splitting it in half like it was paper.

He flew out the other side, skidding across the ground, rolling like a broken toy, sword clattering from his hand.

He finally landed on his side, bloodied and wrecked—barely conscious.

Defeated.

And the battlefield stood silent for a moment…

Until Jaylen's hand twitched, reaching for his sword once more.

CH.36 Everybody, Lock the Frick In….

Dark clouds swirled overhead like a blanket suffocating the sky, painting everything in eerie purple. The city of Musicia looked empty now. The Musinites weren't dead—they'd escaped, lucky enough to flee up the stairs to Celestia.

But Musicia was wrecked. Like a whole chapter ripped out of history.

Buildings lay in ruins: splintered, collapsed, torn in half, leaning like they were one good push from crumbling. Smoke rose from broken rooftops. Cars and buses were everywhere—crushed, rusted, glass shattered across the streets like glitter. It wasn't just a wreck. It wasn't safe. It wasn't even a city anymore.

The whole place felt haunted. Power Gem-made Lunaranites circled the ruins like they owned them, flying between what few buildings were left standing. Thunder cracked, lightning flashed sharp across the purple sky. Beasts wandered the streets alongside them—creatures as dangerous as Lunaranites, maybe worse. Some of them were probably as deadly as Homicide the Hydra.

And if something's scarier than a Hydra summoned by Incarceration himself? Yeah. That's a real problem.

The seven walked along a cracked road, the pavement split wide like empty veins across the earth. Some buildings were missing whole sections. Others leaned against each other like tired giants holding each other up.

The war had absolutely destroyed this place.

Everywhere: distant roars, the flap of leathery wings, monster footsteps echoing off ruins.

Ella glanced around nervously. "Okay, Starla… Are you sure about this? This place does not look friendly."

Starla didn't even blink. "I don't care if we have to go through monsters themselves. We're helping them in Celestia. I know what I'm doing."

They pushed through the wreckage. No Soundanites in sight. No normal life left here.

Some building lights still flickered. Power lines crackled like the last sparks from a dead engine. Starla wasn't fazed. She kept moving, locked in. Focused.

They walked beneath the shadow of a crumbling building until they stopped in front of a tall, rectangular structure. The sign above was barely readable through all the grime: MUSICIA GAS.

The gas station was somehow still standing. Barely.

The green paint was covered in mud and rust. The windows were long gone—just broken glass everywhere. The walls inside were white once, maybe, but now grime coated everything. Leaves were scattered across the floor like a crunchy carpet.

Starla stared up at the building, then exhaled hard and turned away, hands on her hips.

"How are we even gonna find this place?"

Olsen crossed his arms, sitting on a chunk of broken concrete. "It's the tallest building here. How do you not know where it is?"

Starla snapped, "Well, it's not like you know!"

"Hey—guys. Chill," Prince cut in, raising his hands. "We all know Musicia's tallest building is hidden now. Between the damage and everything leaning on it? Of course it's hard to find."

Starla's face dropped. "I'm sorry for snapping. I just…" Her voice lowered. "I miss someone."

She sat down, tail swishing softly behind her, glowing faint blue and purple.

Ella walked over, hand on Starla's shoulder. "Starla… Don's gonna be alright."

Starla nodded. "I know…"

They all got quiet for a moment. Archie stared up at the sky. Violet clouds swirled above, lightning arcing through them like electric veins.

Then—

"HUT TWO THREE FOUR! HUT TWO THREE FOUR!"

The shout echoed through the ruins. Everyone froze.

"Inside, now!" Olsen hissed.

The seven sprinted inside the gas station, ducking under windows, crouching low behind walls and empty shelves.

Footsteps. Stomping in sync. Getting closer.

Then: "AND HALT!"

The marching stopped. Starla slowly peeked up through the broken window.

Real Lunaranite soldiers.

Not the Power Gem fakes. The real deal—lined up perfectly, holding bows, spears, guns. Standing in formation, and in front of them: someone different.

A tall figure raised his spear high.

"OUR LEADER, KING DREADIXZ, HAS FALLEN TO THE CHOSEN ONE'S WRATH!" His voice thundered through the streets. "AFTER THE POWER GEMS BURST THROUGH AVANGARD, FAKE LUNARANITES FELL TO EARTH! OUR MISSION IS TO FIND AT LEAST ONE TO HONOR THE KING!"

"HONOR TO THE KING!" the soldiers roared.

Their leader wore a metal dog muzzle and a sharp-eared helmet shaped like a dog's head. His armor was deep purple, marked with swirling Celtic patterns. Red glowing eyes stared straight ahead.

Then—

He turned toward the gas station.

Starla dropped instantly, ducking out of sight. Her legs shook. Her breath caught in her throat.

She knew him. She remembered everything.

Dreadlock.

- **Dreadlock —** Copy Element
- *Just... Dreadlock. Mysterious and a little wild.*

Third-in-command of the Lunaranites. Not as strong as Dark Don or King Dreadixz—but smart. Deadly.

Leathery black wings. Leathery black tail. Power Mimicry Element. He could copy anyone's powers for two hours—then wait twelve hours before doing it again. Worse, he could straight-up steal someone's Element for thirty minutes, ripping it right out of them.

His villain name wasn't just a name. It was who he was since birth.

Dreadlock had been a problem since Starla was a kid. One of the big three threats alongside Dark Don and King Dreadixz.

There were at least twenty soldiers out there.

Archie sat next to Demaurion, wings twitching nervously.

And that's when another fact dropped into the mix: Starla could read minds. She didn't like using it, but she had it.

She let her mind drift—right into Archie's head.

"I hope they don't kill me. I can't die now. I got a whole prophecy to fulfill…"

Voices piled up. Too many at once.

Starla shut the ability off, pressing her back against the wall, breathing quietly.

She peeked again.

Dreadlock was still there—talking, pacing, throwing around war commands or politics or whatever he was on about.

But Starla had an idea.

If she was going to get to the tallest building in Musicia… she'd have to do it without being seen. No mistakes. No second chances.

That building wasn't just tall. It was hanging by a thread. One wrong move and it'd collapse.

But if she didn't do it?

The risk for everyone else was even worse.

The battlefield of Celestia was nearly empty. No sunlight. Just a red, smoky sky choked with thick sheets of gas and clouds.

The sky looked like Scarletsville's—dark, sick orange, like something was burning forever.

There was no sun. Smoke swallowed it whole.

The ground? Total ruin. Blood everywhere—splattered, smeared, oozing from the bodies of Lunaranites and Celestianites alike.

Buildings were crumbled, cracked, bent out of shape, twisted like metal in a nightmare. Some leaned and creaked, groaning under their own weight.

Even now, some Celestianites were still out there fighting—spears and old-world rifles in hand.

The Lunaranites fought back harder. Claws. Teeth. More fake Lunaranites rained down from the sky, rolling across the ground like beasts, flipping back onto all fours like animals possessed.

Roars and screams swallowed the air. Explosions raced across the battlefield like lightning—one after another.

A Celestianite stabbed a Lunaranite in mid-air—only to get stabbed from behind two seconds later.

The sky wasn't even sky anymore. It was packed—millions, maybe billions—of alien birds flying through all that smoke and fire.

Flames lit up everything. Gunshots, yells, elemental clashes, monster roars. All of it at once.

Pure chaos. No corner left untouched. No cover. No silence.

Blood poured from soldier's mouths, from gaping wounds, like their bodies were trying to escape themselves.

And the Power Gems? They were almost there—glowing closer and closer to the Celestial Pillars.

The only light left in the sky came from a single beam—a bright, lightning-blue ray blasting up from the top of Celestia's Castle, punching through the clouds like a beacon.

All through the shattered Chanted Kingdom, buildings leaned and collapsed. Glass shattered. Fires burned endlessly. Cars—smashed,

flipped, wrecked—lined the streets like metal tombstones.

A full-on war zone.

And in the middle of it all…

Only two figures left standing: Dark Don and Jaylen.

Jaylen was on the ground. Blood dripping from his mouth. Wings twitching. Tail barely moving. His hair hung messy over his face, cut up and bruised all over.

Slowly, he lifted his head—just enough to look up at Dark Don standing over him, smirking.

Dark Don's fists crackled with lunar energy, bright and dangerous, making the very air around him rumble like thunder waiting to hit.

He stood there, listening to the chaos—the screaming, the explosions, the monster roars. Then he looked down at Jaylen again.

"Tsk, tsk, tsk… You could've done better, couldn't you?"

Jaylen coughed hard. Blood hit the dirt. His voice came slow and ragged. "I did my best though…"

Dark Don crouched, leaning down closer, eyes glowing. His voice dropped quiet.

"This is war, kid. Of course you tried. But maybe your best just wasn't enough."

He stood back up, gaze shifting over his shoulder toward the battlefield.

The sky was still crowded with alien birds. And on the far edge of the warzone, Jaylen's crew was still fighting—swinging, slashing, blasting their Elements, their beast powers.

Dark Don tilted his head, like he was sizing it all up.

"What are you gonna do now? Your friends are out there. Fighting an army of monsters. I bet they're getting tired…"

Jaylen's head twitched up again, eyes burning through blood and dirt.

"They'll never get tired of fighting for what's right," he muttered, voice low but steady.

Slowly, shaking, Jaylen pushed himself to his feet. His armor was cracked and nearly destroyed.

But he was still standing.

He wiped blood from his face, teeth clenched, eyes locked on Dark Don.

"Because with this…"

His voice snapped sharp. His energy flared. Cyan and yellow sparks danced around him.

"…IT ENDS NOW."

CH.37 Everybody vs Insane X Incarceration

Jaylen threw a punch—but Dark Don caught it like it was nothing.

A massive shockwave blasted out, warping the air. Reality itself cracked.

Suddenly, everything turned pitch black.

A void. No sky. No ground. Just emptiness. Only Jaylen and Dark Don, frozen in that moment.

Dark Don still gripped Jaylen's fist. His smirk twisted into a scowl.

"You really do hate me, huh?"

He clenched tighter—Jaylen's hand shattered like glass.

Jaylen gritted his teeth, groaning in pain as pieces of his hand floated into the air like broken stars.

Then—BAM. They were back in the war-torn city.

Jaylen hit the ground, eyes squinting, tears slipping out—not from sadness. From pain.

Dark Don pulled back his other fist, lunar energy crackling and swirling.

"Looks like it's time you left, Celestianite…"

But out of nowhere—

BAM!

Angel flew in and uppercut Dark Don straight into the sky!

Angel landed hard, glasses gleaming, voice sharp:

"THERE'S MORE WHERE THAT CAME FROM!"

He dashed forward, spinning with a tornado kick that launched Dark

Don across the battlefield like a ragdoll.

Dark Don smashed through buildings, bounced off cars, slammed through air like a pinball.

Finally—CRAAAAAASH—he slammed into a tall rusty tower. The whole thing groaned.

QUUUIINCH! CRRRAAAANKK!

The tower folded in half, top crashing down onto the bottom. Dust burst out like a volcano.

"ANGEL?! YOU SAVED ME!" Jaylen shouted, coughing up blood and clutching his arm.

Angel gave him a sharp nod—the most serious face he'd ever worn.

"I know… and I brought backup."

Jaylen blinked. "Backup? What do you mean—"

That's when they stepped through the dust.

The whole squad.

The entire crew.

Bruised. Bloodied. Weapons glowing. Elements charged.

Angel stood out front as they grouped up, serious faces, tired grins, little smirks all around.

They were ready to wreck some Lunaranites.

Jaylen smiled through the blood. He turned toward the tower Dark Don had crashed into—

And there he was.

Dark Don teleported right out of the rubble, walking toward Jaylen with a furious glare in his eyes.

But Jaylen wasn't alone anymore.

The whole crew stepped up beside him, Jaylen standing proud in front, Dream Energy burning bright around him.

They weren't tired.

They weren't giving up.

Anhia was still holding an alien bird's head like a trophy.

They were here. Pre-Heroes… ready to become Heroes.

Dark Don growled under his breath. "Is that all of them?"

Angel just grinned, shaking his head.

"Nope. That's not all…"

BOOOOOOM!

The ground shook.

A huge stomp echoed from behind the ruins.

Something massive crashed through the broken buildings.

A giant, colossal Hric stepped out—Kai.

Ever since he'd stayed with the Forgotten Wizard Eldritch, Kai had been given a potion—one that made him grow.

Now he was huge.

Floppy ears smacking buildings like flies. Red eyes glowing. Sharp teeth flashing.

And riding on his back…

Power.

Back like a boss.

Last time, he was lost in the forest. Now? Now he was back, riding Kai like a battle beast.

Kai roared—a thunderclap.

Power raised his fists high.

"WE'VE COME TO KICK SOME LUNARANITE BUTT!!"

BOOM.

Then—

Incarceration teleported next to Dark Don.

Wearing upgraded armor.

Red streaks glowing across his metallic, cyber-robot suit. One arm fully replaced with a cannon, pulsing with dangerous red energy.

His eyes glowed bright through the helmet as he scanned the scene:

The crew. Power. Kai. Celestianites still fighting above.

His gaze twitched like he was losing control. Then he spoke:

"Power… are we really doing this right now?"

He took a slow step forward. Red energy crackled around him like wildfire.

"We've been fighting for a long time… and honestly, I think now's the

time for you to give up this land."

His voice spiked louder:

"It's ours now. JUST TAKE A LOOK AT IT! WHAT'S THE POINT OF HAVING WAR?! IF WE'RE GONNA TAKE THIS PLACE AND TEAR IT DOWN WITH OUR OWN BLOODY HANDS!"

He stomped, eyes flashing red-hot.

"TELL ME, POWER! WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU GUYS STILL HAVE A CHANCE TO SAVE CELESTIA?! WHEN IT'S ALMOST OUT OF YOUR REACH?! IT'S DONE! DONE, I SAY! AND IF YOU STILL WANT TO FIGHT—"

He threw both arms wide.

"COME ON, THEN!!!" It was silent—just for them.

Power and Incarceration stared each other down, face-to-face.

All around them, beasts and fake Lunaranites charged like wild animals straight out of the zoo.

Then—Power muttered calmly, voice low but sharp:

"Yes."

Incarceration slammed his fists into the ground.

BOOOOM.

A shockwave exploded outward, flattening the entire surface of Celestia.

Buildings launched into the air like trampoline flips. The sky howled with a deafening roar:

(BWWWWOOOOOMMM!)

(WOOOSH!)

The battlefield was erased—flattened.

No buildings left. No cover. Just millions of beasts, alien birds, and fake Lunaranites charging full speed.

It was like Incarceration had erased the world.

Then—he fired.

A fiery red explosion lit up the sky, aimed right at the crew.

Everyone dove out of the blast zone.

Elements flared up. Weapons drawn.

The crew sprinted into battle.

Incarceration kept firing, red explosions rumbling like thunder across the land.

The clash lit up Celestia—an explosion of color, sound, and fury.

Incarceration grabbed Ryan, slammed him into Anhia. Launched Lonnie Mae with a blast.

But Emely leapt in, latching onto his cannon.

Incarceration thrashed wildly, swinging left, swinging right, until he flung her off.

That's when Guervens dropped out of nowhere—

A magma spike blasted Incarceration straight into the air.

Jets activated, wings out, Incarceration rocketed up like a missile.

Anhia fired sharp diamond hail shards after him.

Incarceration swerved through the smoky, gas-filled sky, firing shots back down—

Blasts ripping the ground apart.

Through the fog—

Power.

Flying straight at him.

They clashed mid-air—BOOM.

Power tackled him down, slamming Incarceration into the ground in a giant blue explosion that lit up the sky.

But Incarceration wasn't down.

He clenched both fists, blasted Power away with his cannon, rose back up, and kept firing.

Until—

William swooped in, Pterodactyl-style, morphing mid-flight.

A giant gust of compressed wind blasted toward Incarceration.

Incarceration's eyes snapped wide.

Nightmare energy charged up.

He punched the air, countering the gust with a shockwave that sent William flying.

Then he saw it—

Dark Don, flying toward the castle. Headed for the Power Pillars.

Incarceration grinned—until Power came back in with a lightspeed right hook.

CRACK.

Incarceration tumbled through the air like a meteor.

Mid-spin, he fired a massive red blast—

A giant beam slicing across the battlefield.

BOOM.

He landed like nothing happened—until Lonnie Mae's vines wrapped his cannon, slamming him down again.

Another vine whipped toward him—

Incarceration blasted the ground, shredding the vines apart—

And then—Jaylen.

Out of nowhere.

A full-powered Dream Punch cracked into Incarceration's back, launching him sky-high.

Dazed, spinning, Incarceration shook it off and looked down—

Everything flashing too fast.

He fired again—

But Kwa'asja appeared, green barrier flaring.

The blast deflected. Thunderous explosion.

Incarceration landed, spun around—

Sophia sprinted at him.

Kai behind her.

Incarceration narrowed his eyes, muttering:

"…Shit."

Kai roared.

Incarceration shouted back—

"TAKE THIS!!"

Rapid-fire cannon shots ripped across the field.

They slammed into Kai—but he didn't back down.

Angel swooped in, tornado kick—

Incarceration blocked it, grabbed Angel's leg, hurled him into Sophia.

Daysni ghost-sprinted toward him—

He spun, grabbed her mid-air, blasted her across the field.
Sophia hit him with a soundwave—
Incarceration barely flinched. Backhanded her away.
Emely ice-skated in—trident ready—
Incarceration teleported behind her—BOOM.
Jocabed dropped snowflake shurikens—
Incarceration socked her mid-air, blasting her away.
Mason wrapped him in dough strings, yanking him in—
Across the battlefield, Power streaked forward, a blur of blue energy.
Faster than light.
Punching through beasts.
Splattering monsters everywhere.
He leapt into the air—
Both fists clenched.
Ready to strike.
Incarceration locked eyes—
And Power hit him.
BOOOOM.
A red-and-blue shockwave cratered the land.
The air shook.
But—
Incarceration stood there.
One hand gripping both of Power's fists.
He broke Mason's restraints like thread.
Everyone froze.
Incarceration grinned like a madman.
"Oh, how I love when you kids play…"
Arms spread wide:
"THIS ISN'T JUST A RAID. THIS IS BLOOD FOR BLOOD!"
Mason tied him again—thicker, heavier dough strings.
Didn't matter.
Incarceration's grin widened.
"Don't make me laugh."

Power's voice cracked like thunder:

"I'LL MAKE SURE YOU DON'T!"

Power rocketed forward, overhand punch—

BOOM.

Didn't budge Incarceration an inch.

A warping shockwave tore the air.

Wind lashed in all directions.

Incarceration blasted Power away—

A blinding red explosion swallowed the field.

Power spiraled out like a ragdoll, crash-landing hard.

Mason grabbed him mid-air—

Slammed him back down wrestling-style—

Yeeted Incarceration toward Power—

Power hit back with a brutal celestial punch to the gut.

Incarceration flew, laughing:

"You think that hurt?! I've seen nightmares you couldn't even imagine!"

Still laughing, he charged his cannon—

Fired the biggest red beam yet.

KRAK-KOOM.

The ground cracked open, crater the size of a stadium.

Energy sparked around him as he boosted back down.

Raining shots.

Blast after blast.

No breaks.

He landed hard—

Gut-punched William.

Left hook, right hook combo.

Blasted Keyler straight off his feet.

Uppercutted Jocabed.

Caught Emely's trident, spun her like a helicopter blade, hurled her into a mountain—

Blasted her mid-air.

Magma meteors fell—

Guervens landed, blazing punch—
Incarceration grabbed his head, slammed him down onto Coltz.
Slashed Sophia. Backhanded Kwa'asja.
Hurricane-kicked Mason and Angel both flat.
Then—
Blasted himself into the sky like a rocket.
From space, he scanned everything:
Kayson—stone titan form.
Kai—still stomping beasts.
Jaylen—
Flying at him in full dragon form.
Eyes burning.
Jaylen tackled him mid-air—
BOOM.
They clashed, soaring higher into the stars.
"GRAAAHH!!" Jaylen roared.
Talons gripped tight.
"You wanna know something insane?!"
Jaylen's voice cut through everything:
"YOU'RE GONNA DIE!!!"
They fell.
Spiraling down like a comet.
Blows traded mid-fall—claws, fists, roars.
Until—
"ENOUGH!"
Incarceration blasted Jaylen point-blank—
A red-ring explosion shaking the sky.
His gaze snapped down to Kayson.
Fired.
Again.
Again.
Until—
KABOOOOOM!

Kayson's titan form shattered.
Back to base form.
Incarceration rocketed back down—
Crashed into the middle of the field.
Among the fallen.
Blood everywhere.
But—
One figure still stood.
Jaylen.
Limping.
Nose bloodied.
Wings wilted.
Tail nearly severed.
Shaking.
Barely breathing.
But his eyes burned bright.
"You're not winning, Incarceration…"
Jaylen muttered through gritted teeth.
"…Just wait… till they come."

CH.38 Chaotic Minds of Chaos

We stayed crouched behind the window for what felt like forever—waiting, not breathing, making sure they didn't see us.

It wasn't just a minute or two. It really dragged.

The sky stayed dark and dim, thunder rumbling, lightning ripping through the clouds like wild veins of light.

Wind howled sharp enough to cut. Shadows drifted through the air, swirling like ghosts.

Behind us, we could hear the Lunaranite soldiers chanting:

"All hail King Dreadixz."

And that's when I started hearing things.

Memories. Echoes from the people around me, voices in my head.

I tried to block it out—focus.

The windows were shattered wide open.

The whole building was buried under heaps of leaves, spread across the floor like someone tried to hide the place under autumn.

Dust and mud caked the walls.

Now me—Starla—I needed a plan.

After glancing up at the massive tower standing tall in the center of Musicia, I knew.

I had to escape. Help everyone win this war.

Yeah, maybe my Astral Element isn't the flashiest. But it's useful. It worked against Duke, didn't it?

The point of the plan:

Get there without the Lunaranites or Dreadlock spotting us. Escape. Fight back.

I leaned toward Ella, whispering, "Alright, I've got something that'll get us out of here and to Celestia fast."

"What is it?" she whispered back.

I explained, low and serious:

"Prince, Archie, and Demaurion will distract them. Me, you, Olsen, and Eli head to the tower. Eli covers us while they're getting chased. Then Olsen throws us to the top—where the golden stars are. Once the others catch up, I'll use my tendrils and horns to pull everyone up. Then we escape to Celestia—stairs should be there."

Ella nodded and passed it on to Archie, who nodded to Demaurion, who nodded to Prince, then Olsen, then Eli.

Everyone got it.

I peeked up through the shattered window.

The soldiers were still locked in formation—four by four. Dreadlock stood right in front.

Suddenly, Dreadlock turned toward the window.

I ducked fast, heart hammering, hand over my mouth.

A long few seconds passed.

He turned away.

I exhaled hard, glancing back at the crew.

Everyone was ready—Elemental powers crackling around them like quiet storms.

I looked through the empty doorway.

Loose papers and metal scraps blew in from the wind.

Eyes narrowed. I looked at Prince, Demaurion, Archie.

A smirk crawled across my face.

Astral energy surged through my arms and face—cyan and yellow tendrils lighting me up.

"You heard the plan—NOW GO!"

The tendrils whipped out and grabbed them.

Prince blinked, confused.

"WAIT, WAIT, HOLD UP—I WASN'T READY—"

"TOO LATE!" I shouted, flinging all three of them straight through the window.

They screamed, flying sideways through the air and hitting the ground with a heavy grunt.

Prince stood up slow…

Right in front of Dreadlock.

The Lunaranites all stared.

Blank. Puzzled.

Prince froze.

Demaurion and Archie already had their weapons drawn.

Prince cleared his throat.

"Uhh… Squawk. I'm a bird."

One soldier raised his musket.

Prince's voice cracked, sweating:

"Squawk. Squawk. I'm just a bird that looks like a human. You're, uh… imagining things."

A few seconds later—

"AHHH! YOU GUYS ARE SHOOTING AN INNOCENT ANIMAL!" he screamed, tearing off through the city like a bright blue blur.

Archie launched into the sky, fire blazing below storm clouds.

"TAKE THIS!" he yelled, firing a massive fireball.

Demaurion blasted it down with water.

"Not now, Archie!"

Meanwhile, me, Ella, Olsen, and Eli sprinted out of the gas station, weaving through ruined buildings.

The whole city leaned sideways—buildings slumped like wounded giants.

I leapt over fallen walls, gunshots echoing behind us, and I could still hear Prince's voice begging for his life.

We ran harder.

Sliding rooftops. Crashing through alleys.

The city felt haunted—half-dead, monsters creeping in the shadows.

We dropped down in the middle of four buildings.

"Great, great, GREAT—what now?!" I snapped.

Eli pointed up.

The tower.

That was it.

We sprinted again—dodging busted cars, debris everywhere.

Olsen smashed through walls like nothing, clearing our path.

Then—

A fake Lunaranite dragon dropped in front of us.

Massive. Jaws wide, teeth sharp enough to split metal.

We froze.

It crept closer. Wings flared. Beady eyes locked on us.

Eli didn't hesitate—teleported right in front, slashing with his Wyvern claws.

The beast collapsed, blood spraying out.

Coast clear.

Prince and the others kept fighting—not killing, just buying time.

Prince blurred through the streets.

Thunder cracked.

And the rain hit.

Not gentle. A flood.

Water gushed through buildings, sweeping fake Lunaranites away.

Demaurion controlled the wave, steering it toward empty buildings, smashing everything in its path.

I squinted through the storm—we were close.

"COME ON! WE'RE CLOSE!" I yelled.

Hair soaked. Wings heavy. Didn't matter.

An alien bird aimed its cannons—

Bullets ripped through the air.

We ducked.

Olsen shouted, "I GOT THIS!" and hurled his hammer.

Direct hit.

The bird spiraled down, blood spraying, crashed hard.

The hammer came back—Olsen caught it like a boss.
"WE FINALLY MADE IT!" he yelled.
We looked up.
The tower loomed above—rusty, crooked, shattered windows.
It creaked like it might fall any second.
But it was huge—bigger than anything around it.
"Now we just need to get up there—come on, Olsen!" Ella called.
Olsen grabbed me and Ella—
Launched us.
Full Earth-powered strength.
We flew through hot, smoky air, stinking of ash.
I looked down—
Fake Lunaranites rushed Olsen and Eli.
"OLSEN! ELI! WATCH OUT!"
Olsen spun, hammer to the ground—
A rocky shockwave exploded out, stone spikes rising like a fortress.
Prince blurred around the battlefield.
Demaurion sent waves crashing.
Archie threw fire.
Dreadlock lit up—stolen Fire Element burning from his arms.
Flames exploded toward Archie—
Buildings cracked, leaned, snapped in half.
Debris flying everywhere.
"GUYS! LEFT!" Ella screamed.
Olsen turned—
Eli froze time.
The debris hung mid-air—suspended.
Only for a second.
He couldn't hold it long.
Ella and I landed hard on the rooftop.
I almost fell. Caught myself.
Eli was struggling—
I yanked both him and Olsen up with my tendrils.

They landed beside us.

I turned—Prince. Demaurion. Archie.

Still down there, fighting.

I grabbed my horns tight.

They started humming.

A mythical tune. Indigo glow.

I closed my eyes. Focused.

Pulled them up toward us.

When I opened my eyes—

They were already there.

Lunaranites looked confused as hell.

Behind us—

Golden stairs.

Wide as a mansion.

Glowing. Forged by King Vigilzante himself.

The wind still carried screams—both Lunaranite and Celestianite.

"COME ON, COME ON! LET'S GET OUT BEFORE WE ALL DIE—MOVE!" Demaurion yelled, racing up.

Everyone followed.

Archie grinned, "LET ME LEAVE A PRESENT!"

He launched one last explosion—

The whole city shook.

Ash everywhere.

One by one, they leapt into the sky through the opening clouds.

And me—

I stopped.

Turned back.

Looked down at Musicia.

Once alive.

Now burned.

Ashes.

A memory hit me. Hard.

I grabbed my head, shook it off—

And jumped through the entrance after them.

My knees slammed into hard, stone-like ground.

Eyes fluttered open—blinding white everywhere.

A void. A realm of nothingness.

And I was completely alone.

No Archie. No Prince, Demaurion, Olsen, Ella, or Eli.

Just me.

I stood up slow, brushing dust off my clothes from whatever explosion or madness I'd just been in.

The void stretched on forever—blank, endless.

"Where… am I?" I whispered, wandering the emptiness. "I was just in a fight. Why the hell am I here?"

My brain spun in circles. I couldn't remember how I got here. Everything before this was a blur—moving too fast to grab hold of.

Was it too much? Was it all—

"Starla."

That voice.

Deep. Echoing through the void.

I whipped my head around, scanning everywhere.

"Hello?"

I knew that voice.

Deep. Wise. Heroic.

My… dad?

Then I saw him.

Far ahead, standing tall in the white nothing, arms wide open—my father.

Golden king's armor shining. Purple cape flowing behind him. Eyes glowing radiant yellow. Thick white beard.

Sword in hand, long and narrow, Celestianite Emblem shining at the tip.

My heart clenched.

"D-DAD!" I cried, sprinting.

Tears streamed down my face, trailing behind me.

I ran faster than I ever had.

Inches away.

I threw my arms around him—

And felt nothing.

He wasn't there.

Eyes shot open.

Gone.

He'd never been there at all.

Then—voices.

"Starla! Starla?"

"Starla, are you okay?!"

Blink.

Suddenly, I yelped.

I wasn't in the void anymore.

I was standing in the middle of a golden highway.

Cars zoomed past like comets.

The road shimmered under our feet—gold and amber. Sky a dusty orange haze, smoke and gas everywhere.

Blood stained the pavement.

We were on the Celestia Bridge.

Golden towers stretched up like skyscrapers. Cyber-cars and bikes zoomed past, engines roaring louder than the alien birds screeching in the distance.

I grabbed my head, dizzy. Ella caught me, steadying me.

"You okay?" she asked, serious.

I didn't know. Not really.

"I… I thought I saw my dad," I whispered. "But… he wasn't real."

Then I looked around again, trying to focus.

"Do you guys remember Musicia? The alien Uragas? The fake Lunaranites? Dreadlock?"

Everyone looked at me like I just glitched out of existence.

"Yeah," Archie said flat, "I think the cupcakes messed you up."

Then I spotted it.

A gray van.

Glowing blue markings. Cannons on the roof. Just… sitting there in the middle of the road like it belonged.

Olsen squinted. "I don't know what that is, but—aaaaand there it is."

All of us turned.

Above us: Lunaranites and Celestianites brawling mid-air.

Blood. Spears. Bullets.

And then—

BOOM.

Heavy stomps. Getting closer.

"You guys hear that?" I asked, heart already speeding up.

Demaurion crossed his arms, gripping his trident. "I don't hear anyth—"

ROARS.

Far down the highway, cars flew like toys.

Metal crunched. Glass exploded.

Three giant black bloodhounds, striped red like demonic tigers, burst through.

One upright. Two on all fours. Jaws snapping.

Prince whispered, "Oh… shit."

I spun around.

"WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?!"

The beasts charged.

Closer. Faster.

Olsen's eyes locked on the van.

Without a word, he sprinted, yanked the door open, grabbed the wheel.

Ella shouted, "OLSEN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!"

"JUST GET IN! WE GOTTA GO!"

We didn't wait.

We piled into the van.

I jumped passenger side. The others crammed in back.

The inside glowed cyan. High-tech dashboard, buttons lighting up everywhere.

"ALRIGHT!" Olsen shouted. "WE JUST GOTTA LOSE THESE MONSTERS AND FLOOR IT!"

He slammed the pedal down.

The van blasted forward.

Behind us, the bloodhounds gave chase—smashing through cars, hurling them like grenades.

Prince peeked through the back window.

"THEY'RE CLOSING IN!"

Olsen swerved, dodging a truck, tires screeching.

Then—click.

He hit a red button.

Cannons on the roof spun up.

"PRINCE—TAKE THE SHOTS!" Olsen barked. "ARCHIE, BURN 'EM! DEMAURION, LIGHT 'EM UP!"

Prince's chair suddenly shot upward—launching him through the roof.

"OKAY, WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO M—"

Demaurion got launched too.

Both now in control of mounted cannons.

Prince panicked—didn't know what to aim at.

Demaurion shouted, "JUST SHOOT IT LIKE A VIDEO GAME!"

Prince locked in.

"TAKE THIS, YOU BEASTS OF HELL!"

He unloaded, bullets flying.

One beast, upright, hurled a car.

"OLSEN, DODGE!"

Olsen swerved hard.

The car exploded behind us.

Archie dove out the back, phoenix mode.

"EAT FLAMES!"

Fire bombs lit up the highway.

Demaurion fired nonstop.

One beast caught a direct hit—flipped over.

Archie followed with a final blast.

Blood and flames everywhere.

But the two-legged one kept throwing cars.

Another one blasted a beam straight at the van.

"OLSEN, MOVE!" I yelled.

"ON IT!" Olsen yanked the wheel, crashing through traffic like a pro, drifting onto another lane.

"SHOOT 'EM, PRINCE!"

Prince dialed in—precision shots now.

Explosions ripped across the monsters.

Then—he climbed onto the roof, electricity sparking around him.

Serious face.

"Let's take this up a notch…"

He jumped.

Off the speeding van.

Lightning tendrils burst from his hands, latching onto the beast.

He slid across the ground, pavement sparking under his feet, holding the tendrils tight.

"ARCHIE! BLOW IT UP!"

Archie unleashed another explosion.

The beast's skin ripped apart.

Cars flew. Flames roared.

Then—BOOM!

Archie hit it dead-on.

One final explosion.

The whole highway lit up.

When it cleared—

Prince let go, flipping back onto the van.

"OH YEAH! THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT!"

Demaurion and Archie jumped back in too.

Olsen grinned, still swerving.

Then—he saw it.

Celestianites and Lunaranites clashing in the distance.
And there…
Incarceration. Fighting the crew. Like it was nothing.
"I FOUND OUR STOP!" Olsen shouted.
He spun the van into a drift—skidding like crazy.
Everyone held on.
The van LAUNCHED into the air.
Screaming.
The battlefield below lit up—fire everywhere.
The van slammed down, skidding sideways until it finally stopped.
Silence.
Door kicked open.
Olsen stepped out first—like a total legend.
Everyone else followed, walking like absolute badasses.
Incarceration paused mid-fight.
"Well, well, well… Look who decided to show up."
I clenched my fists.
Olsen cracked his knuckles.
Prince sparked with lightning.
Ella bared her claws.
Eli glowed with time energy.
Demaurion had his trident.
Archie burned like a star.
We were back in the fight.

CH.39 War Means Done…

The 7 stood right in front of the van, in their fighting stances ready to attack the villain: Incarceration. Incarceration beamed his eyes at them, low and sharp, with a menacing frown across his face. He chuckled, lowering his cannon down at them. Fire blazed across the dark field of nothingness, the sounds of screeching Alien Uragas and the Celestianites and Lunaranites attacking each other with millions of explosions, letting go a countless amount of screams and groans. The rest of the crew grouped up with the seven, and they got ready to attack as well.

Olsen stood in the center, his fists clenched and gripping onto his Hammer of Earth, tight. "Kids these days, guess they'll never learn," Incarceration muttered. He lifted his cannon up into the air, and he flared his cybernetic wings. He loaded the cannon with a click, and then he slowly pointed it at Olsen and the others. "I guess this is how heroes are these days, relentless… I don't see any problem with a relentless hero, but the only problem I do see in them is fighting for no cause…." He narrowed his eyes at Olsen and the crew, the deep shade of crimson glowed under the dark light of the orange sky and the sheets of smoke and dust covering it. "I don't see why you guys still keep fighting for this wretched world that's already destroyed…. I mean what's the point? Celestia is gone, and in the future, Avangard will be gone too…"

Jaylen landed right next to Olsen, wings flaring with his fists clenched in his fighting stance. "You think we'll ever let that happen?" he chuckled, "No." A smirk spread across Incarceration's face. The cannon started to

warp and pulse with red energy inside of it, and he locked it onto the huddled group.

"Alright then, come as close as you'd like… Trust me, it won't hurt a bit…" Then, just as soon as he was about to shoot, Power streaks across the battlefield towards him, looking like a blue line of energy. He strikes Incarceration hard with his fists from the back. A huge blue shockwave erupts from his fists, shaking the area and causing the wind to act harshly. Incarceration caught it with his arm, turning to Power with a smirk. "COME ON THEN!" He strikes Power with his fists back, launching Power into the air only 3 feet up, and then Incarceration grabs his leg to twirl around and then violently hurl him across the battlefield with no mercy. Power starts tumbling back at insane rapid speeds and then he crashes into a large building, which slams onto him and creates a dust eruption.

Everybody shoots a glare at Incarceration, and then they jump into action without a word. Prince speeds towards Incarceration, bolting through the battlefield faster than a lightning bolt to teleport right in front of him and send in an electrifying overhand punch to the gut, which Incarceration blocked, releasing a huge blue shockwave of electricity that shot rocks into the air around them. The wind started to twirl and move in a circular pattern around them rapidly, then Incarceration struck back with a hard red blast that lit up the land with a bright red flat destructive shockwave.

Then Olsen comes in with his hammer to whack, and Incarceration backhands Olsen away. Ella throws in sand tsunamis towards Incarceration, and Incarceration jumps over them to fire a huge repulsive blast at her, sending her flying away into the skies. Then he lands back onto the ground, creating a huge flat shockwave that reformed the area.

Then he quickly turned to Jaylen, who was firing dream blasts at him, blasting him away so that Archie can land a huge explosion onto Incarceration, leading him to rattle across the ground and quickly skid across the ground back and then start sprinting towards Archie with his cannon.

Then he leaps into the air, firing a huge red blast from the cannon, which

lit Archie's eyes in complete flames so he could chuck a whole flaming sun that was colossal towards Incarceration. Incarceration's eyes lit up, and they struck him mid-air, creating a huge fiery explosion that was orange and caused the sky to glow. Incarceration lands onto the ground, tumbling back violently and wildly, leaping into the air from his back, crashing through sides of mountains and jagged rocks.

Then he finally crashes through a large jagged rock, only so Eli can teleport right behind him. In slow motion, he spins around and attacks Incarceration's back with knife hands and then a green energy orb onto the back, which creates a whiplashing immense forceful shockwave and green explosion that filled the entire battlefield up with its radiance. Incarceration gets launched up into the sky to get hauled by Olsen and then slammed down onto the ground by him. He crashes as Power and Prince run over him at the same time.

Incarceration quickly gets up onto his feet, only so Olsen can speed past him with a whack to the face from his hammer and another whack to the face while speeding towards him back. Then he skids across the ground right next to Incarceration, quickly swinging his hammer like a staff and starts spinning around and throwing it around, only to slam it onto Incarceration's chest so hard that the ribs from the armor almost cracked and then (BWOOOMMMMBBBBB!!!) the shockwave and explosion sent Incarceration backflipping at the speed of light into the air, crashing through the mountain, causing him to descend all the way back to the ground like a meteor. Then Angel from the bottom with Sophia looks up at him falling down like a red fiery meteor, then he says, "TAKE THIS!" Dark blue energy swirls around Angel as he releases a wide and huge oversized portal underneath Incarceration for him to fall through. Then Incarceration falls through the sky after going through that portal. His eyes quickly dart around, and then he notices someone flashing through the skies at light speed.

Then Jaylen teleports right in front of Incarceration to strike his face so hard that the dream punch sends him sprawling all the way back down to the ground, now crashing towards it, creating a wide and harsh shockwave

that spreads across the entire battlefield, breaking the bones of mountains and completely reshaping the land of the ground itself. Cracks instantly start to form, and then Incarceration gets up in the middle of a wide and large crater where the main 7 surrounded him. Olsen twirled and spun around his hammer to whack him with it, which sent Incarceration staggering back. Then Prince finally appeared right behind Incarceration to lightning strike him, and then Archie fires a huge blazing spinning side kick to his face while Ella dives under to uppercut his chin, creating a huge sand arm that grabs Incarceration's body to slam him down onto the ground after suffocating him. Then Eli freezes time, rewinds it, and then he twirls around as he skidded past Incarceration to deliver a hard 100 knives attack while Incarceration was frozen mid-air. Then he let go of time itself, only for Incarceration to get attacked by Casper and create a huge explosion of complete blinding green energy that engulfed the entire battlefield and the skies itself.

Then, Starla stood tall—right in front of Incarceration—with zero fear in her eyes. She reached for her horns, gripping them tight. They lit up instantly, humming with a deadly celestial frequency. Slowly, with power radiating from every fiber of her being, she lifted Incarceration into the air like a goddamn boss. From the earth below, yellow and cyan astral flames erupted in a blaze, wrapping her body in divine fire. Her eyes burst with blinding light— And then she roared. With a mighty grunt, Starla slammed both fists into Incarceration's gut. (BOOOOOOM!!!). An earth-rending, sky-splitting, land-flattening, battlefield-purging shockwave exploded outward.

The blast was so intense it rattled the clouds. Dust swallowed the sky. Starla hit the ground on her knees, breath shaking, staring down at her own hands. A tired sigh escaped her lips. One by one, the others gathered, leaping down into the massive crater. All eyes turned to Incarceration—on all fours, trembling, a single drop of blood falling from his mouth.

The first time he'd ever bled… by kids. He wiped the blood slowly. He stared at it. Inspected it. Like he couldn't believe it was real. It was. Zenith blood. His head slowly lifted. Eyes locked onto the young warriors—

the Pre-Heroes—and for the first time, his face showed something other than arrogance: shock. Jaylen landed at the front, his dragon tail swaying with dominance. Kayson and Kai stomped forward like twin hurricanes. Jaylen stepped up, voice steady: "It's over. Time to give up. This… is the end." "NOT TODAY!!!" Incarceration blasted off the ground, unleashing a massive red explosion right at Jaylen. The shockwave tore across the battlefield in a blinding streak of crimson energy. A tower of red fire erupted into the sky, turning everything blood-red as Incarceration screamed to the heavens— "RAHHHHHHHHHHH!!! HAAAAAHHHHHHHHH!!!"

His fists clenched. His face twisted in fury. Red energy crackled through his veins, lightning-like streaks crawling up his skin.

Then— KA-KOOM! An insane, thunderous shockwave ejected from his body, launching everyone into the air, scattering them like leaves in a storm. The explosion folded in on itself, then burst again, like a glitch in reality. The wind screamed. A hurricane swirled around Incarceration. His eyes burned hellish red, and his cannon was fully charged.

But before he could fire— "OVERPOWERED OVERHAND!" (CRACK!!!) Power's fist collided with Incarceration's chin, unleashing a blue shockwave that shattered the air like glass. Incarceration reeled, bloodied and battered—but somehow still standing. He chuckled, blood dripping from his lip as the chaos paused around him. "Heh… Is that all you've got?" Power's eyes widened. Incarceration ripped Power's arm away and sneered: "I dream of NIGHTMARES YOU CAN'T EVEN COMPREHEND!" (BOOOOM!!) His punch obliterated the air, a red shockwave erupting from his fist and slamming Power across the battlefield. Then it was chaos again— He grabbed Olsen and shattered him over his knee like a twig. He caught Archie mid-punch, snapped his arm, and tossed him aside. Prince blitzed him with lightning, but Incarceration grabbed his head mid-run and slammed him down, creating a red shockwave that flattened half the battlefield. Eli teleported to freeze time and land a blow— Incarceration shattered through the time freeze and uppercutted him into orbit. Starla rained beams from the sky like divine judgment,

but Incarceration just stood there, cannon locked on her— Until Daysni leapt from behind, wrapping her arms around the cannon, trying to hold it down. Incarceration growled and flailed like a beast, whipping the cannon wildly.

Then—BOOM! Lonnie Mae's vines wrapped his legs, yanking him to the ground. From above— Drake dropped, launched by Fedejina, and blasted mud that glued Incarceration to the floor. Then came Mason—spinning in spiky doughnut form, he front-flipped into human shape, wrapped Incarceration in dough, and began twisting. "PIERCING CLOTHESLINE!!!" He lifted Incarceration high and SLAMMED him into the dirt. The ground cracked for miles. But Incarceration just broke out of the dough—unharmed. He fired beams everywhere. He blasted Ryan before he even got close. He intercepted Sophia's soundblasts, reflecting them back with a wind shockwave that sent her screaming into the sky. He backhanded Angel, shot an ice beam at Emely, smacked Fedejina out of the air with a swing of his cannon— And then slowly turned, ready to annihilate William who was right in front of him to try and tackle him down, and he instantly fires in a huge blast at him which created as huge erupting red explosion that shakes the earth and caused the wind itself to vibrate.

Incarceration slowly turned, metal boots grinding against the cracked earth as he yanked Olsen by the collar and SLAMMED him into the dirt with a seismic thud. The shockwave sent ash and debris rippling outward. He didn't hesitate—his arm shifted, parts clanking and twisting, reforming into a massive cannon as it charged with a chilling hum. But just before he could fire—snap!—thick, silvery spider-strings whipped through the air and coiled around the cannon, yanking it upward.

Keyler stood behind him, his arms outstretched, muscles taut as he struggled to hold back the weapon. "You're not firing that thing today," he growled through gritted teeth. Olsen, bloodied and wheezing, weakly hurled his hammer through the air toward Keyler. "CATCH IT!" he barked. The hammer spun violently in midair, morphing mid-spin into a jagged, earth-toned axe lined with sharp rock and shimmering veins of power.

Keyler caught it with one hand, still clutching the cannon-string with the other. He flashed a smirk at Olsen. Then, with a quick pivot, he hurled the axe toward Incarceration. CLANG!

The tyrant caught it mid-flight with one hand, eyes narrowing.

Then, without hesitation, he twisted his body and slammed the axe straight into Olsen's chest. (CRACK!) Olsen's body jerked as the weapon buried deep into his torso. Blood sprayed from his mouth like a crimson geyser. He collapsed, the axe still embedded in his chest, its jagged edge gurgling with blood. He was alive—but barely.

The blade had narrowly missed his heart. Smoke drifted lazily into the blood-red sky. Incarceration pressed his metal foot down onto Olsen's chest, forcing him deeper into the dirt. He leaned down, face inches away, voice a low growl. "What a win-win…" He rose slowly, scanning the battlefield. From the heavens above, the skies were in chaos.

Celestianites—noble dragon-like beings bathed in radiant light—were falling one by one like burning comets, wings torn, blood trailing behind them like ribbons. Their celestial energy dimmed as they crashed, their bodies bursting into pulses of starlight and ash upon impact. Above them, alien birds with metallic feathers—the Lunaranites—swooped and dived in eerie synchronization, firing dark crescent beams that sliced through the sky like scythes. Every time a Celestianite fell, a Lunaranite circled above, screeching in haunting harmony as their wings exploded in black sparks, bodies crumbling and detonating upon impact.

It was apocalyptic. The sky itself looked like it was bleeding. All across the battlefield, heroes lay defeated, broken, bloodied. Only Jaylen remained—on his knees, shaking, drenched in blood. He stared up at Incarceration, eyes burning with defiance. Incarceration turned toward him, lips curling into a wicked smile. The ground trembled beneath his feet. He raised his cannon, morphing it with a mechanical (shhhk!!!) into a blade nearly his height. Its edges pulsed dark red. He looked down at Jaylen. The others—Ella, Demaurion, Keyler, and the rest of the crew—watched, battered and helpless from the ground. Incarceration knelt. "You were a brave soldier," he said slowly, cruelly. "A powerful one… perhaps."

"No! N-NO!" Olsen cried, his voice barely above a whisper. Incarceration rose, arms spread wide. "I ANNOUNCE TO YOU ALL—" he bellowed, voice booming like thunder.

"THAT THIS PENALTY… WILL BE FATAL! AND HE… WILL DIE FOR THE GOOD OF US ALL! THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME HAVE THE WIN!" "DON'T KILL HIM!" Ella cried, her voice raw, breaking. Jaylen's wings twitched, feathers soaked in blood. "If I die… then I'll die for a good purpose…" he whispered. Incarceration raised his sword, slowly. It gleamed with dark energy, his eyes glowing with triumph. "Like he said… if he'll die, he'll die for a good cause." He whispered. "Bye… Jaylen the Celestianite." Demaurion clawed toward him on his stomach, screaming, "DON'T KILL HIM OR I'LL KILL YOU MYSELF!"

Incarceration whispered one final time. "Bye." His sword came down. (SHWING!) Silence. Time stopped. Eyes shut. Hearts frozen. They all thought it was over. The imagined sound of the blade slicing through Jaylen's skull echoed in their minds like a nightmare. Olsen flinched. Keyler lay face-down in the dirt.

But then… Keyler's head twitched. He opened his eyes slowly, blinking through the dust. He stared forward. And froze. A figure stood over Jaylen. Holding the blade. Don. His head down. Crouched. Both hands gripped the sword's edge, halting it inches from Jaylen's skull. Everyone's heads slowly lifted. Don's horns glowed a radiant violet. His tail swayed like a serpent of light. Celestial energy crackled wildly from his body, arcing through the air like lightning. His wings flared behind him, massive, divine. His eyes blazed with purple fire. Around him, Celestianite corpses shimmered, as if their remaining energy had awakened. Even the Lunaranites hesitated. Incarceration's jaw dropped. His eyes wide. He was stunned. Frozen.

(Switched to Don's Perspective)

Then I looked up, locking eyes with him. And I couldn't resist to say a badass line: "Surprise," I muttered, with a smirk. I slowly reeled my fist

back, energy building and crackling like a supernova. "I'm back, bitch." My fist connected with his chin— BOOOOM!!! The impact shattered the air like glass. The land split open. Mountains in the distance cracked. And then—I reached up to his own face, smirked—and RIPPED his own head clean off like it was a mask using his daggers. Underneath, my eyes glowed even brighter, celestial flame crackling through the void beneath the skin. I roared into the skies, voice shaking the heavens: "I'M BACK—AND I'M BLACK!" Celestial lightning spiraled around me, the battlefield frozen in awe and horror. I stood tall, godlike, a storm of vengeance about to explode. I held his head up into the air, Incarceration's head. A whole ZENITH'S HEAD. I chuckled and smirked, "And that's how you end a final battle…"

CH.40 Ultra Dark Don, ARISE

I quickly sprinted towards Olsen, who was slumped against a rock, sitting with his back to it. He had an axe pierced straight into his chest, and his face was bloodied, breathing heavily—fighting for dear life.

"You alright, bro?" I said as I swiftly yanked the axe from his chest, tossing it to the ground. Olsen slowly pushed himself off the rock, beginning to limp a little, and just before collapsing, Lonnie Mae's vines caught him and shot through his chest from behind. The vines glowed a faint, soft green, and they gradually healed Olsen's wounds—the blood washing clean off his body.

After a few minutes of healing, Lonnie gently pulled the vines out, leaving Olsen to stand on both of his legs. He was alright.

He was finally breathing normally, and he could move freely again. He groaned, "Yeah… I'm alright…" The sky was still in its war form.

Dark gray clouds and thick sheets of smoke draped over the earth, and the ground was pitch-black, with flames blazing and burning wildly across the area.

This was Celestia now. It was all… gone.

The ground was torn apart, scorched by fire, and once-tall buildings were crushed and collided together, now reduced to a ruined wasteland. From afar, the city looked destroyed—like someone stomped on a pile of fragile Legos. Celestianites lay dead across the ground, blood everywhere. Millions of them scattered around the battlefield.

They fought well… but I guess the enemy was just too much. I shook my

head, staring into the flames. "How are we gonna fix this now?" I turned around completely, facing everyone else. They walked towards me with tired grins on their faces.

"I see what you mean, Don… the place is—just like Scarletsville," Sophia said, her eyes scanning the ruined battlefield. Starla looked up at the sky and saw her brother, Prince Lock, flying toward her in full Celestianite Dragon form. His armor glittered and sparkled, splattered with blood—everywhere. His spear was crimson red, and so were his talons.

He landed slowly on all fours right in front of Starla, then gradually transformed into his base form, staring straight at her. The two of them narrowed their eyes at each other, then Lock shook his head in disappointment.

"Where were you the entire time?!" he yelled. "I had to fight millions—and I'm not kidding, MILLIONS—of Lunaaranites! There was blood everywhere—EVERYWHERE! And YET YOU DIDN'T COME!" "Brother, it's not my fault!" Starla said as she steadily walked toward him, her eyes wilting. "Look, I'm sorry for leaving, but I can't just let Dreadixz collect all the Power Gems!"

"Where is Scorch? What happened to your guardian?!" Lock barked. "He's supposed to protect you—he's supposed to ALWAYS be with you!"

"Lock, I'm old enough to take care of myself! I don't need Scorch to protect me all the time! I fought in this war like everyone else, and ever since Dad was gone, the last thing he told me was that sometimes people have to walk alone!" Starla snapped, gripping her brother's arm. Lock stood there, staring deeply into Starla's eyes. She stared back, her glare firm and serious. Then Lock sighed, pulled away, and turned around to walk off.

"Fine. Just remember… don't get yourself killed." I stood beside Starla, watching Prince Lock walk away. "Some sibling dynamic, huh?" Starla sighed, rolling her eyes.

"He's just like that all the time." William suddenly noticed something. His eyes darted around the field as if he were trying to spot something.

Then they widened as he turned back to the crew.

"Uh, guys… where are the Officials?" "The Officials?" My head perked up. I raised my eyebrow at William. "What do you mean? Did they fight with you guys or something?"

"Yes!" Kwa'asja nodded. "Guerven and Coltz—they were with us, right? The only Officials we have here are Jaylen and Lock! But where are the others?" Jaylen looked up into the sky, peering from afar, then squinted. "I think I already found our answer…"

Everybody turned their attention toward Jaylen. He was pointing at something way off in the distance. We all shared glances, then walked toward Jaylen to stand beside him. I stared across the valley of fallen Celestianites and raging flames—and then I saw something… HUGE. It was a massive castle—the Castle of Celestia.

It was still golden, still standing. It looked completely intact. It shimmered from afar, glistening despite the lack of light. The tower reached high above the clouds, nearly touching space. But something wild was happening… A streak of blue energy was flowing from the top of the castle and shooting straight into the sky. I could see it through the smoke and dust—it was a bright, glowing line of Power Gem energy. I whispered under my breath, shaking my head in awe, "Oh no…" "WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!" I whipped my head around.

Ella screeched, "It's Dark Don! The Power Gems must've gotten into the Celestial Pillars—and he's probably right there!"

"YOU'RE RIGHT, ELLA! INCARCERATION LITERALLY TOLD DARK DON TO GET TO THE CELESTIAL PILLARS BEFORE WE EVEN STARTED FIGHTING!" Keyler cried, wiping blood from his nose.

I clenched my fists, and violet celestial energy—like flames—erupted from them. I gritted my teeth, staring into the sky, finally realizing what it meant. The rest of the Officials were probably over there—fighting Dark Don in the castle. And it looks like… Dark Don won. As we gazed up at the towering structure, a radiant lunar explosion BURST from the castle—and I saw DARK DON AND COLTONZ FLYING OUT OF THE CASTLE LOOKED LIKE IT WAS SURGING WITH STREAKS OF WHITE AND GREEN ENERGY!

They both started clashing in mid-air, punching, kicking, and launching energy blasts that exploded all around them, shaking the very ground and tearing into the atmosphere like thunderclaps. Then suddenly, Dark Don delivered a brutal punch straight into Coltonz's gut, launching him straight down toward the earth like a missile.

The green streak fell through the sky, and then— (BWWWWWOOOOOOOOMMMMMM!!!) A MASSIVE green shockwave blasted across the battlefield, rattling both the ground and the air itself.

I held on tightly to the ground, gritting my teeth against the wind, my eyes squinting shut. Then, in a flash, I forced them open—and celestial energy erupted from my right eye like a flare. Once the chaos simmered down, I rose up, holding my arm and scanning the wreckage.

My tail whipped rapidly behind me as I spotted the white streak jetting back into the air—now clashing with a bright red one. The white streak suddenly spun at rapid speed, morphing into a tornado of blinding light, and hurled the red streak down into the ground, causing another massive eruption. This time, chunks of earth were launched sky-high—actual slabs of land exploding into the air.

Things briefly calmed again. I glanced back up at the glowing white streak. Behind me, I heard everyone murmuring, just as stunned as I was. Then the glowing white figure looked down at me—and my eyes widened. In a blink, before I could even react, he was right in front of me, gut-punching my stomach so hard I went flipping backward across the scorched ground, my back scraping it at full speed.

The impact unleashed an enormous white lunar shockwave that quaked the area all over again. I accidentally leapt sideways mid-roll, but then I crashed into a jagged boulder—shattering it into fragments that exploded outward.

"DON!" I heard everyone shouting from the distance. I forced myself up, clenching my fists and slipping into my fighting stance. Celestial energy crackled around me violently, pulsing like raging violet flames. My eyes darted across the battlefield for the figure.

And then—BOOM—he came soaring down toward me, his arm reeled

back, ready to throw another devastating blow. I barely managed to launch myself out of the way.

His punch smashed into the ground instead, creating an explosive shockwave so intense it launched me into the air like a trampoline rebound. Chunks of earth and rock scattered into the sky, and I flipped mid-air before landing with dramatic flair, skidding across the ground. He landed hard in front of me, fists slamming into the ground with force—yet I stood firm, bracing against the quake. Wind howled around him, his glowing white aura pulsing in flashes. Rocks flew around him in a spiral, the wind itself seemed to obey him—swirling, bending, amplifying. I finally peeled my eyes open—and I looked at the figure.

It was Dark Don. Except… it didn't even feel like him. I only guessed it was him because of the lunar energy—and because the others told me. He looked like a full-on lunar god now. A glowing, silver being made entirely of celestial light. An energy even brighter than my KX form. His pupils? They were replaced with glowing letters: "XK". Excuse me?! Is this dude trying to be an off-brand me right now?! XK?! Okay… now he's just being extra. His hair had six spikes—two large ones curling back from the top, two arching upward from the bottom, and two more sprouting out from both sides of his head. All of them glowed with a radiant silver hue. The lunar energy flared and cracked around him like lightning, his glowing white eyes locked onto me.

Then he snapped his fingers. The chaos around him stopped. Everything. And even though I couldn't see his mouth, I swear I saw the smirk.

"Well, well, well… it's nice seeing you again, dragon boy…"

"HOW ARE YOU ALIVE?! I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD! PARALYZED!" I yelled, wings twitching, eyes wide in disbelief. He laughed. A deep, dark, menacing laugh. Slowly, he levitated into the air, arms folded. Everyone around us froze, watching him rise.

Dark Don hovered mid-air like some kind of divine being, his eyes glowing like searchlights. He looked like a lunar deity ascending to the heavens. Then he just stopped, floating effortlessly. His light was so bright… I could feel it.

I could tell—it was visible around the entire world. He was outshining all of Celestia. Arms and legs crossed.

Floating. Silent. Dominating.

He took a few glances at his body, shifting and flexing it slightly, then turned to me and muttered in a cold, deadpan voice, "Great…" He floated still in the air. "Now that I have the most powerful form in Avangard's entire existence… I can FINALLY annihilate you…"

I smirked, placing my hands on my hips, my tail flicking and dancing behind me with rhythm. "You sure about that? I've fought beasts, monsters, even King Dreadixz — took him out too. Don't forget Incarceration — his decapitated head's rotting just on the far side of you!"

Dark Don scoffed, motioning with one arm while the other stayed folded across his chest. "Do you really think you still have the will, the nerve, and the strength to defeat me? Think again, Don… I already dropped two Officials, nearly killed your friend Jaylen. Remember what I told you back at Insane Middle School?" I rolled my eyes casually, tail still whipping back and forth like a banner in a storm.

"I didn't forget, Dark Don. You're a bounty hunter, a scarrist, a version of me that thinks it's better in every way, shape, and form… But you wanna know something?" Dark Don narrowed his glowing eyes at me, hovering with that same menacing, soul-chilling demeanor.

"What?"

I clenched my fists tight, flooding them with raw celestial energy. I clenched again, and the entire area began to tremble violently. I stomped my foot with all my force, and it tore right through the solid ground like a jackhammer, shaking the earth once more. Celestial energy warped and swirled around me like a growing vortex, and I snapped my head upward, eyes blazing a radiant violet hue. My tail whipped furiously, my wings twitched like they were preparing for liftoff. Celestial sparks danced along my body, crackling like electricity from my feet to my head. The earth below began to quake — no, erupt. A whole earthquake was tearing through the battlefield.

Everyone around struggled to stay upright, but the seismic rumble just

kept getting worse. It quaked, trembled, quivered, and shook — over and over like a living beast. My eyes flared with the glowing letters KX. The energy spiraled around me like flames on overdrive.

My eyes were already bursting with celestial fire, and my hair was going wild. It started morphing — two massive spikes forming. One sprouting from the crown of my head, arching backward. The other from the back of my skull, pointing straight up like a blade.

Cracks erupted from the ground below me, and my eyes blazed brighter and brighter. Celestial power crackled harshly and wildly, winds screamed around me, and debris started floating in the air. Then — with a fierce shout — I roared: "RAAAAAHHHHHHHHH!!!" Celestial energy erupted from my body in a violent explosion.

A massive, dark violet beam launched from me like a cannon blast, rocketing toward the sky at lightning speed.

My neckerchief scarf flailed wildly in the storm, tail thrashing faster than ever. The light radiating from my body was blinding — a whole purple comet hurtling toward the heavens, ready to shatter them. Stones spun and whirled around me faster than sound itself. Wind twisted into a full cyclone, the landscape shook beneath me.

Dark Don gave me a sinister, disapproving glare. The energy around me surged and flamed like wildfire, then suddenly — woosh — the beam faded into the wind. I was left, cloaked in pure violet celestial energy.

My eyes glowed brighter than ever, teeth clenched, fists ready to bash in some Lunaranite jawlines. One pupil had a glowing "K", the other an "X" — both burning with dark violet fire. Stars shimmered and rippled around me like cosmic waves. Then, I lifted off the ground, rising into the air. Everyone looked up in awe, silent.

I struck my fighting stance midair, squaring off against Dark Don. He mirrored me — copying the stance like a challenge. I narrowed my eyes and whispered with a grin, "It's go time."

CH.41 Ultra XK Dark Don vs KX Don: FULL POWER!

He dashed towards me in the air, and I darted back. We both collided mid-air, creating a massive, widespread shockwave that impacted our allies and disturbed the wind so chaotically that it shattered mountains.

I delivered the first right hook to his face, sending him spiraling backward until he flew back towards me like a lunar star. He struck me with his fists, which I blocked with my other arm.

I spun around to flash-kick him into the air, firing millions of celestial blasts at him. He looked down and started firing as well, soaring towards me, dodging all the blasts effortlessly. He flew through them swiftly with precision.

Then, I spun around mid-air to deliver a punch that lit up the entire sky. I was sent flying back, crashing through mountains and everything, until I stopped myself and boosted back up into the air, screaming, "RAHHHHHH!" After that power-up of celestial energy, I soared towards him with my arms filled with celestial fists charged. I struck him first with a right hook, then a left hook, a knee strike, and then an elbow strike on the back that sent him spiraling back down to the ground.

He crashed, and then when he saw me, he blitzed into the sky like crazy with full power. He had his fists out towards me, ready to strike my gut, but then I fired a huge celestial blast at him and started to rapid-fire at

him.

He spins, twirls, swirls, spirals, and soars through the blasts, dodging them with no problem at all. Then he charges up his other fists filled with white glowing lunar energy, and he tries to sucker-punch me with them, which literally worked when he hit my face. The air shook, and I was sent flying back down to the ground mid-air.

Then he followed me with his fists charged up once again. Then he screams, "GRAHHHHHHHH!" and fires a huge lunar blast that was radiant and white, racing towards me like crazy.

My eyes glow after seeing this, and then I power up quickly to fly towards the beam with my fists out. I strike it with one punch, causing it to completely explode in lunar energy and collapse.

Then I spin around to turn myself towards Dark Don, and I boost myself towards him, looking like a whole celestial streak.

We both clashed, and then I spun around to right hook his face and then spin side-kick him to the face with my leg, which sends him flying to the side. Then I fly towards him while he's spiraling mid-air, and then I spin around rapidly to deliver a hard sucker roundhouse kick into the air. He gets sent backflipping while screaming, and then he stops himself close to the atmosphere. He shakes his head completely and boosts back down towards me as he powers up with lunar energy. Both of our fists collided, creating a huge purple and white explosion in the air that went across the entirety of Celestia.

The light radiated so much that I almost got blinded, and then I looked around frantically to find Dark Don.

Then he teleported right behind me, which I noticed, and I spun around to try and grab his arm, but he swiftly moves right behind me again to lunar drop-kick me down hard. I get sent flying down like a whole meteor, and I crash through the ground so hard that the shockwave and explosion erupt from me, and the rocks were sent flying as the earth shook. I quickly got up, wiping blood from my face.

I smirked at Dark Don while he was still in the air. "Great…" I charged up and launched myself towards him like a rocket. He starts to charge up

his hand to fill it up with lunar energy to blast me with a large beam, but I get there just in time to teleport right in front of him and do the 20-20-20 Celestial Dropkick onto his face.

The impact from the blow caused him to fly through the sky uncontrollably and create a whole widespread moving shockwave everywhere.

He crashes through whole peaks of golden mountains and crashes through a large abandoned building that I managed to fly through.

I saw him descending down to the ground in his Ultra form, and then I charged up with celestial energy to shout, "365 DAYS!"

Ten purple celestial fists made out of celestial energy came down like rain from the heavens, falling down towards Dark Don. Dark Don instantly saw them with one eye, and then when it hit, a huge explosion erupted, and it said (BWOOOOOMBBBB!!!). The explosion caused the air to whip around and send buildings flying everywhere. Pieces of mountains were cut off while the land and the air shook.

And then, when the dust faded away, Dark Don was holding onto all ten of the fists with one arm, with no problem at all. My eyes widened in shock and awe when I saw this.

Then Dark Don charged up with lunar energy and sucker-punched the fists, creating a huge lunar explosion that created a massive shockwave and blew the wind completely. The wind pressure was so hard that I was almost drifting away into the air, and the fists cracked, which caused all of the energy to be sent towards me completely.

I used my other arm to try and cover myself from the damage, and Dark Don came zipping toward me at lightning speed, his entire body overflowing with lunar energy. Then—BAM—he punched me in the gut so hard I went flying into the air like a whole flipping water bottle being yeeted across a room.

Then he teleports right beside me to strike my face again, sending me spiraling back down to the ground like a meteor from outer space.

Then—BOOM—he teleports above me and slams me into the ground as hard as he can, creating a massive, bewildering explosion that raged across the entire land and shook everything to its core.

Dark Don lands on top of me, grabbing my neck. "Not so powerful, are you?" he snarls. Then he launches himself into the air with me in tow, and just starts beating the absolute life outta me with left hooks, right hooks, backhands—you name it. Then he grabs my head and boosts us toward the nearest mountain.

He SLAMS me onto the rocky cliff, dragging my body across it violently like I was just a rag doll in his way. Blood flew from my nose in every direction, and then Dark Don spins around and completely body-slams me into the mountain again. My face buried in the rocks, dazed, and then—crack—he pulls me out and hurls me back toward the ground. I'm falling now, descending from the air like a whole shooting star, when Dark Don teleports right in front of me—outta nowhere—and just punches my lights out with one clean strike to the face that was way too much.

He grabs my head again and SLAMS me into the ground, then starts sprinting at light speed, dragging me across the surface like he's mopping the floor with my soul. The others could only watch as he then throws me into the air and dropkicks me mid-air with one leg.

I was sent spiraling like mad, crashing through millions of tall buildings, just blowing through them like tissue paper. He follows me, warping through the chaos like a glitch in a corrupted video game.

Then—POOF—he teleports right in front of me again and tornado-kicks me sideways, and before I can even react, he's behind me, gripping my neck as tight as he possibly can. My hands reach for my throat, gasping, and then he smirks—his energy crawling across my skin like venom.

He launches both of us into the air and then SLAMS me back down to the earth so hard that the entire landscape shakes violently and the ground cracks open—SPLITS APART. Then Dark Don turns around and flings me into another building, obliterating it, then flash-kicks me into the sky, teleporting again to hit me with a brutal punch to the gut that sends me flying across the heavens.

He starts warping around in glitchy zigzags like someone's fast-forwarding a TV channel from hell. I was so beaten I couldn't even track where he was going. Then—snap—he teleports right in front of

me, grabs my entire body, and rockets toward the ground like a missile from the moon. He shouts with the force of a planet as lunar energy starts to glow and pulse like a mini supernova: "LUNARIC DECISION!" And he SLAMS ME DOWN SO HARD INTO THE EARTH that it creates a full-blown world-warping, reality-cracking, air-shattering, dimension-breaking, gravity-bending shockwave that rips through my body with a force SO hard it could shatter time itself. Then—get this—he boosts back up into the sky with my body still in his grip and soars through the smoke-filled skies toward the castle where the Power Gems were stored.

He crashes through the roof like a comet and throws me across the ground like I was nothing.

Debris and chunks of architecture go flying as I slide across the floor, busted up and wrecked.

Dark Don levitates slowly down to the ground, arms crossed, eyes glowing with that cold lunar glow. He smirks down at me. "You tried…"

CH.42 A Strike for POWER, Radiant Chaos

I slowly glanced around the area, dizzy from all of the brutal attacks Dark Don had launched at me. And one thing finally clicked in my broken mind: THIS ISN'T THE CASTLE OF CELESTIA! We were inside the Room of Zeniths, nestled next to one of the tallest golden towers of Celestia itself. Everything around me spun.

I was bloodied, battered, knocked straight out of my KX form. Done. I looked up at the celestial pillars, circled like ancient titans. The Power Gems—scattered like spilled stars—were lying near them, close to the golden bases. The room, while aged and cracked, still shimmered with golden beauty. "This… this isn't the Castle of Celestia… this is the tower.

The Room of Zeniths," I muttered hoarsely to Dark Don. I was lying on my back, bleeding, bones cracked. I couldn't feel my spine—pretty sure I broke something serious. Dark Don, the glowing lunar figure of menace, stepped toward me slowly with a wide, wicked grin. White and silver lunar flames danced around his figure like living spirits.

His bright eyes locked onto mine, staring right into my soul. He spoke quietly, eyes surveying the area. "I know. This tower is connected to the Castle of Celestia. It sends the blue energy beam into the skies, sourced from the castle itself…"

I tried to get up, but his rocket shoes slammed down on me—THUD!—pinning me hard. The searing heat and radiant pressure from his aura crushed me. I groaned, my voice cracking. "So what happens

now…? Is that why there were fake Lunaranites crawling around? Alien birds flying through the skies? I can still hear 'em flapping…" He chuckled darkly. "Why kill you… when I could kill the world? Honestly, I don't care for this place anymore." He turned his back to me. My eyes widened. "Destroy—the world? A-ARE YOU INSANE?!" I coughed hard after yelling, my lungs on fire. Dark Don slowly turned back, that same uncaring expression painted across his face. He scoffed.

"I… am… insane." He clenched his fists as lunar energy crackled violently around him. "First target: the moon. Next target: Avanga—" Before he could finish, Jaylen zipped in like a bolt of lightning, grabbing Dark Don and launching both of them sky-high. A yellow-cyan streak and a white-lunar streak collided mid-air—boom, boom, BOOM—crashing like stars.

Then Keyler slid through the broken windows, using his spider threads to anchor down. A portal opened in front of me and out stepped the entire crew. Archie rushed to my side and helped me up. I looked to the shattered ceiling. I saw Coltz (green streak), Guervens (red streak), and Prince Lock (yellow lightning streak) all joining Jaylen in the sky war.

Olsen trudged toward me, still injured from the axe attack. He smirked, "You alright?" I nodded with a sigh, and then Olsen glanced at the scattered Power Gems in the center of the pillar. Something about his eyes told me he was about to do something—something either really good… or really bad. Pain struck through my chest.

I collapsed faster than ever before. Prince flashed to my side and caught me. He helped me up as I groaned, clutching my chest.

"What happened, man? Are you okay or something? Did Dark Don really beat you to a pulp?!" he asked. I nodded, breathing hard.

"Yeah… he did beat me… harder…" I collapsed to my knees, then faceplanted into the ground. I lay on my chest before slowly turning my head to the Power Gems. My eyes widened, crackling with celestial energy as the light from them shot through my mind. Flashbacks—literal flashbacks—blitzed through me at light speed.

Everything I've gone through. The challenges. The victories. The reason I ever became a hero in the first place. But I was down. Broken. Battered

by Dark Don so hard it felt like there was no use anymore… He landed from the sky like lightning and stood right behind the crew. He walked forward. His eyes widened when he saw me.

Blood dripped from head to toe, soaked into my hero suit. He exhaled and sauntered toward me. He knelt beside me as I turned onto my back, staring into his eyes. Power's gaze wilted in sadness. He quickly turned to Lonnie Mae, shouting, "Heal him!" Lonnie rushed over, vines sprouting from her back, wrapping around my neck.

They squeezed gently as a green aura surged through them. My eyes squinted. My breath shaky—but still there. Power pressed his forehead against mine as the blood slowly faded from my skin and suit. "Don, does it look like you can utilize the KX form again? Our world is at stake…" I turned away with a quiet, broken, "No."

Kai the Hric hopped toward me in his tiny form, landing on my head. He licked me, then bounced around, licking my arms and chest. He was worried. Like, scared scared.

He whimpered, pushing my body, trying to get me to stand, but I was too far gone… Lens Don the Celestianite… was gone. Angel stormed over, portals swirling behind him. "Don the Celestianite! You don't know what the world's going through! The only way it gets saved—is YOU! JUST LOOK AT THIS!" My head twitched toward him. Behind him, ten swirling dark blue portals opened wide, revealing Avangard's apocalypse. The frozen Eclitsic sky filled with alien birds. Millions of fake Lunaranites. Monsters roaring and screeching, knocking down everything in sight. Scarletsville was getting bodied. Alien birds and nightmare creatures with claws like blades and teeth like saws. Iris Town in flames. The Land of Hearts—destroyed. Musicia—destroyed. Mechamio—chaos, with King Gordiman doing nothing. The Rufty Mountains? Worse. Earthnites hiding in caves, watching their homes burn, monsters bombing from above. I slammed my fists into the ground, rage surging through me like wildfire. "THERE'S NO POINT!" I screamed. Slam. "THERE'S. NO. POINT!" Slam. Slam. "WE WENT THROUGH ALL OF THIS! FOR WHAT? FOR CELESTIA TO GET DESTROYED?! FOR DARK DON TO

RIP AVANGARD TO SHREDS?! FOR ME TO BE BEATEN TO A PULP AND LEFT HERE?! JUST TO STARE AT SOME POWER GEMS WHILE I ROT IN MISERY?!" My voice cracked. "WHAT AM I EVEN GETTING OUT OF THIS, HUH?!" Kai hopped back, afraid. He crawled into Starla's arms, and she held him close. I finally stood. Fists clenched. Celestial rage sparking around me like a storm gone wild. I was pissed. I was shattered. Don't tell me we did all this just to stand here helpless. There's. No. Point.

"THIS ISN'T ALL FOR ONE—THIS IS ALL FOR NOTHING!" I stomped the ground, a monstrous shockwave exploding outward. The whole building shook. Dust floated upward in slow motion as I breathed deep and slow, looking around the room with sharp, glowing eyes like Dark Don himself. "I'm done here." That's right. I'm done. This is like trying the same damn level in a game over and over again just to keep losing. You gotta quit or lose your mind. "DON! WAIT!" Power grabbed my shoulder. I turned slowly. His blue eyes narrowed with desperation. "I know it feels rough. I get it. But you can't just give up already! We can still beat them—like we did Incarceration!" "WHEN I SAY I'M DONE—I'M DONE!" I barked.

He held onto my shoulder tighter. Whispered, "There's no 'E' in Don… There was never an 'E' in Don." My breath caught. He wasn't wrong. Then he looked me dead in the eye. "Remember what you said back then? Remember what you said in Scarletsville… before we even fought Next-Evolution King Scar?"

I paused, my mind racing. Memories flashed—moments with my friends, every battle, every laugh, every time we almost didn't make it. And then it hit me. "We're the Five Chosen Ones, remember? That means we do whatever it takes to fulfill the prophecy—all of it. If we die, we die. But I'm not backing down. We beat this guy… or we die trying."

I snapped back into reality, out of my thoughts and into the ruined tower. Power stood right in front of me. My eyes widened—I blinked slowly, then looked down at the ground, really looking, like it had the answer.

"How are we gonna win, though?" I whispered. Power smiled gently. "It isn't about winning, Don… It's about saving the world. You don't

know if you're gonna win. But as long as everyone's safe? You've won the battle. Avangard needs you—monsters, fake Lunaranites, alien birds, more monsters, fake Lunaranites again, even more monsters—" "Did you forget fake Lunaranites?" William asked, raising an eyebrow. "Oh yeah! Fake Lunaranites," Power said with a grin.

He looked right at me. "You're gonna be the first—and youngest—Hero of Avangard after this prophecy is fulfilled. You're our final hope, Don. You are…" We locked eyes. I stared deep into his soul. He stared into mine.

The moment froze. Then I looked down. Kai was curled up, snuggled against my leg. I reached for my twin daggers, unsheathing them slowly.

Then I smirked. "You're right, man. Let's get this show on the road… and make sure everyone makes it out safe."

"But how exactly do we do that?" Olsen asked, glancing over at the Power Gems resting in the heart of the Celestial Pillars. His eyes lit up. He turned to me with a wide grin. "You know what to do, Don." "Wait—me? W-wait, hold on! Isn't there a slight chance this could, y'know, destroy my body or something?" I stammered, staring at the gems like they might explode on sight. Prince clapped a hand on my shoulder.

"Olsen's right. Do what you gotta do." Archie popped in like always, "You're gonna be the next Celestianite King, bud! Might as well own it! Everyone's countin' on you!" "It's either you do it, or the fate of the world just happens," Demaurion muttered with his usual mood. Starla cheered, wings fluttering excitedly. "You're gonna be called King KX! Or maybe King Kai Xai, Don!" Drake gave me a huge thumbs up, teeth shining. "TAKE ONE FOR THE TEAM!" Angel bowed dramatically. "Future Celestianite King… the world depends on you." Power joined him in bowing. And then… everyone followed. They all bowed—Daysni, Anhia… even Sophia?! Bro, no way. If I really am that important… then I've gotta do my thing.

I looked down at my hands, crackling with celestial energy. I clenched my fists, hard. I thought about all the friends I'd made—the battles, the journey, everything this world threw at me. I'd done it all. Now… It's time to give the world something back. I turned toward the center of the

Celestial Pillars. My gaze swept across every one of them… and I smiled.

"Thanks. Let's get this show on the road…" I stepped into the center of the pillars, my boots clicking against the ancient golden stone. My fists clenched with purpose, the weight of a thousand fallen warriors in my chest.

My wings began to flare, flapping wildly, stirring the wind into a vortex around me. I closed my eyes slowly. Deep breath. I could remember that one textbook—how to awaken my Ultra Form. One rule: Scream. Scream like a freaking demi-god.

So that's what I planned to do. I inhaled, light purple energy glowing from my eyes. The building started to rumble. Wind howled. The sky twisted. I felt it. My tail swayed violently, caught in the storm I was creating.

Around me, the atmosphere began to snap, vibrating with pure celestial power. The very fabric of reality groaned under the pressure. Celestial energy started to crackle off my body—flickering flames of violet aura—dancing like fire, like I was a living sun. Every breath built up light. More light. More pressure.

And then I screamed. "RAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH—!! (gasp) AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!" The wind SWIRLED around me like a hurricane launched from the gods themselves. The entire building was shaking. Structures of gold were flung into the air, spiraling upward. Debris, clouds, echoes—gone in the storm. The Power Gems started floating up around me, glowing brighter than they ever had before, each one shooting colored beams straight into my core. "RAHHHHHHHHHH! AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!" My cries boomed louder than thunder, way louder. The battlefield froze.

Even Dark Don mid-kick stopped cold, turning his head, locking one eye on me. His brow furrowed. Then my eyes ignited.

The deepest, most brilliant light purple you could ever imagine. The energy wasn't just around me anymore—it was me. I was the only light in all of Celestia. The clouds spiraled, the heavens themselves warped. Even the Lunaranites—those creepy, shadowy monsters—were stunned. Their

jaws were on the floor.

And now, the last step. I slammed my foot into the ground. BOOM!!! The land shook. Shockwaves ripped across the sky. "ULLLLLTRAAAAAAAAAAA—" Wind exploded from around me, blowing Lunaranites away like rag dolls, lifting dead Celestianite bodies into the air. "ULLLLLLTRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA—!" Everything shattered. Rocks split apart. The sky hesitated. "KX!!!!!!!" I threw my arms into the sky—and then— "DOOOOOOOOOOONNNNNNNNNNNNNNN!!!!!!!" BOOOOOOM. Celestial energy burst out of me like a sun being born. A radiant violet beam screamed into the sky like an inverted lightning strike, splitting the clouds open with a CRRRRRRCHHHHHMMMMMMM!!!

Five shockwaves blasted outward, flattening everything. Trees disintegrated. Mountains bowed. Enemies were yeeted into oblivion. I ascended. Light purple celestial fire wrapped around me like armor forged by the universe itself. My hair flared into five wild spikes—two on the sides, one backwards, one up the neck, and a massive divine horn-like spike in the center. My eyes glowed—KX etched across both irises.

Radiant markings burned across my body, alive with ancient power and purpose. I wasn't Don anymore. I was a walking singularity. A cosmic event. A force that could body-slam reality. I raised my hand to the sky… and ripped it open. A golden rift spilled divine light down like waterfalls. Celestia, battered and broken, gasped as life surged back into it. The dead stirred—resurrected. Families reunited in golden tears. The Enchanted Kingdom roared back into existence.

Crystal towers pierced the clouds. Rivers turned to golden streams. The grass itself whispered with energy. I snapped. Every Celestianite wore golden celestial armor, fitted to their soul and strength. Radiant. Majestic. Divine.

I turned to the Lunaranites. Still standing. Still locked on me. I raised my hand again—this time, the Celestianites' armor upgraded to white-plated platinum gold, sparkling with celestial circuits and star-etched gems. They stood taller. Stronger. Unstoppable. I hovered into the sky, blazing like the final boss of heaven. I looked at him. Dark Don. He was silent.

Then… a grin. "…You really did it," he muttered, silver sparks building at his fingertips. "Alright then… let's take this beyond limits." He cracked his knuckles— And then he exploded.

"ULTRA LUNAR ASCENSION!!!" he roared. The sky went white. Not just light—blinding. A massive surge of silver and white energy blew outward in a perfect sphere. The clouds twisted into a spiral above him. Gravity warped. The earth cracked and floated. Time itself hiccupped. His body floated in the center of a glowing storm.

Silver lightning danced around him like snakes. His wings morphed into jagged prisms of lunar crystal. His hair sharpened into spiked, silver flames shooting upward in a chaotic halo. His eyes were eclipsed orbs—white with swirling silver rings like black holes in reverse. A lunar crest etched itself across his chest, pulsing like a second heart. Then came the Lunaranites. One by one, they rose from the battlefield.

Their armor shifted—reflective silver plating laced with white glowing veins. They shimmered like ghostly paladins of the moon, with weapons forged in lunar energy: curved swords, spiral spears, mirror-shields of infinite reflection. Dark Don raised a hand, and time paused for a split second. "Lunaranites…" His voice echoed like a cathedral bell in a time loop. "Stand. Fight. Erase." They roared. The battlefield lit with silver fire. I looked at him—this divine glitch, this warped mirror of me—and I grinned. "Celestia's alive," I said. "You're done." He smirked back, floating higher. "Then show me what a king can really do."

"CHARGE!!" I commanded, my voice booming like thunder across the skies. All of the Celestianites surged forward, a radiant wave of gold and white wings and armor gleaming like a holy storm. The Lunaranites roared back, savage and bloodthirsty, spears raised, muskets loaded, jaws snapping. I didn't wait.

I DARTED straight toward Dark Don at literal light-speed. I struck first — my fist slammed into his jaw with a blinding white celestial explosion that lit up the air like a miniature sun. Dark Don didn't flinch — he came back swinging, aiming straight for my face. I shifted to the side just in time, dodging at light-speed.

He followed instantly, glitching through the air like corrupted data. We teleported mid-air, violently and rapidly, reality tearing at the seams around us. Sparks flew. Time glitched. Everything looked broken. Then — BAM! — we both teleported directly in front of each other, fists cocked. Our glowing punches collided with a colossal silver and violet shockwave that rocked the battlefield. The sky shook. Our eyes locked.

He hit me with a tornado kick, sending me plummeting toward the ground — but I caught myself mid-fall and blasted back up like a celestial shooting star. I collided into him with my 123 Combo, fists blazing. I ducked under him mid-air, twisted around, and nailed him with the meanest aerial kick straight to the back. He spiraled through the sky like a ragdoll. I smirked. "Let's go." I boosted toward him, fists fully charged — but he dodged and came in swinging, his fists blurring. I ducked under a side kick, spun, and unleashed a spinning Celestial Orb right into his face. He blocked it with a backhand, knocking me aside, but I recovered mid-air and tackled him hard, grabbing his entire body.

We crashed through clouds, exchanging furious punches to each other's faces, until — BOOM!! We smashed through a towering golden building, splitting it clean in half. We skidded across the floors, hurling energy blasts, then crashed through the exit and exploded back into the sky, still fighting. He slammed me into the ground — I rolled, recovered, and LAUNCHED myself high into the sky, charging my power.

"SWITCH TO POWER GEM STRENGTH!!" I screamed. Celestial energy surged through my body. My arms bulked up, glowing with divine muscle. I flew at Dark Don like a comet and punched the LUNAR outta his teeth, sending him rocketing into the atmosphere like a blazing meteor. I zipped after him. He was flying backward, launching wild lunar blasts.

I dodged, flipped, spun — deflecting them all. I raised my hands and summoned a glowing celestial orb, charging it until it pulsed like a mini sun. Then — BLAST!! — I fired it like a divine arrow through the sky. Dark Don saw it coming. He snapped his fingers. Time froze. The beam halted — inches from his nose. He raised his hand, absorbed all its energy, then snapped again — and fired it back at me as a spiraling LUNAR BEAM. I

flew over it and countered with a barrage of Celestial Blasts, purple comets streaking through the air after him.

He spun, sucked them in, and returned fire with 50 glowing lunar arrows. "INFINITE PIERCING!!" he roared. The arrows rained down like divine judgment. I flew toward them, flipping and spiraling through the storm. BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! Purple explosions erupted around me as I shattered each arrow mid-flight. I grabbed one mid-air, spun with it, and slammed it into Dark Don's chest, triggering a massive explosion in the sky. He backflipped violently through the air. Then — CRASH!! He plummeted through crowds of Lunaranites and Celestianites — getting hit by every single one as he fell.

He tore through buildings, towers, stone and steel, ripping through the city with a trail of total destruction. And all of it? Was caused by me. Then he crashed through the final building, slamming into the ground and rolling violently across it at high speed. He tore through another structure, debris flying everywhere. His eyes suddenly ignited—so intensely they shook reality itself. With a surge of force, he stopped himself mid-roll by standing up straight in the air as if gravity meant nothing. Then, with a guttural roar— "RAHHHHHHH!" —he exploded forward toward me, blazing with fury. I shouted through the clouds like a celestial commandment: "SWITCH TO SPEED!" I blasted forward like a white comet tearing through the heavens, a pure celestial streak rocketing down from the sky. One lunar star coming at full speed—one celestial star diving to meet it. Our fists charged up to maximum power, glowing brighter than suns. We screamed in unison as the forces inside us collided, our voices thundering across the cosmos: "THE ULTIMATE STRIKE!!!" BOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMM!!! A massive explosion and shockwave burst out from the point of impact. The wind howled like hurricanes, the earth quaked, and even the air itself cracked and fractured.

Then—everything changed. We were no longer in Celestia. We had punched our way into a new plane of existence—a cosmic domain swirling with color. No darkness. No shadows. Just endless space bathed in deep purples, bright whites, radiant indigos, and electric blues. Stars sparkled

all around, dimensions overlapped like shattered mirrors, and reality itself bent and spiraled. I blinked, disoriented.

"What the—" Dark Don didn't wait. He flashed in front of me, delivering a brutal lunar side kick straight toward my face. I ducked, spun, and we collided mid-air again, clashing like rival stars with unfinished business. We zipped and bashed around the cosmos like two supernovae trying to outshine each other. I caught him with a solid punch, then flash-kicked him upward. I teleported right in front of him, locking eyes. "THE CHOSEN ONE'S ULTIMATE STRIKE!" I drilled my fist into his gut so hard he spat blood—even in his Ultra Form. He was launched downward, crashing through countless layers of dimensional space. I zipped past him, spinning through the air, then nailed him with a brutal strike to the jaw. I soared high above, building momentum. Celestial energy spiraled around me like a tornado.

My fists began to glow with the full strength of both the Strength Power Gem and the Power Power Gem. Every roll—faster. Every second—stronger. I was spinning faster than the speed of light. Then—impact. "VIOLET VIOLENCE!!!" BOOOOOOOOOM!!! I SLAMMED him down with both legs in a devastating finishing dropkick.

The shockwave cracked the fabric of the dimensions around us, shattering space itself and launching us both back into the skies of Celestia. Dark Don grunted and rose, summoning a colossal white hole from the void. He held it high above his head with both hands. It crackled and screamed with cosmic energy. I clenched my fists, pure celestial energy raging within them, and launched toward him with a war cry: "AHHHHHHHHHH!" He charged toward me with the same fury, the white hole screaming along with him: "AHHHHHHHHHH!" We collided again—and everything vanished in a flash. Suddenly, we were in Heaven. I blinked rapidly, looking around the radiant City of Heaven, staring at the throne of Jesus Christ Himself. "Are we… in Heaven? Did we just die?"

We clashed again, trading blows across the divine sky, teleporting between clouds and sanctified marble pillars, sending holy shockwaves through the realm with each punch. Then—one final collision. A blinding

light. And we were back.

Snapped back into Celestia, mid-air, fists raised and hearts pounding. We had gone through life, death, and every dimension in between.

And the battle wasn't over. Not yet. I floated, breathing heavy, my fists still glowing. Dark Don hovered across from me, barely scratched but clearly annoyed. The air between us was electric—silent, but screaming with tension.

Without a word, I charged him again. I unleashed a brutal combo—left, right, uppercut—then caught him with a glowing kick that sent him spiraling through the clouds. "NOT DONE!" I shouted, teleporting above him. My body ignited in blazing violet light. Then I roared, "CELESTIAL FORCE BREAKER!!" With both hands, I hurled Dark Don like a meteor straight down at a distant, massive golden mountain that shimmered like a divine monolith in the far reaches of Celestia.

BOOOOMMM!!! He smashed into the side of the mountain, cratering it with a thunderous impact that echoed across the land. Dust and divine energy whipped up into the sky like a holy volcano erupting. Dark Don slowly stood, steam rising from his body, a dark smirk on his face. "You still think you can save Avangard?" he spat, his voice dripping with venom. "You naive little freak. This world deserves to be erased." I floated above him, glaring, my wings flaring wide.

"And you think destroying it will fix anything?! Avangard is my home. My friends, my family—they're worth fighting for." He scoffed. "Friends? Family? They make you weak. I was born in your shadow, Don. But I will end as your superior. Avangard doesn't need heroes. It needs a reset." "You don't need a reset," I growled. "You need a therapist."

Dark Don chuckled. "Too late for therapy." In a flash, he vanished—and reappeared behind me in the blink of an eye.

Before I could react, he shouted: "LUNAR DEATH LAUNCH!" WHAM!!! He roundhouse-kicked me so hard, my body turned into a streak of light—ripping through the clouds, breaking the atmosphere, flying past orbit like a comet— —and I crashed into the moon. I skidded across the lunar surface, carving out a trench across half the cratered

terrain.

I coughed, stood up slow, wiping blood from my lip. From above, Dark Don descended like a wrathful god, his body crackling with white and violet energy. We stood there, facing each other under the stars. The Earth hung behind him in the void, blue and beautiful. The moon trembled beneath our feet. I clenched my fists, smirking. "So… round two?" Dark Don grinned. "No—final round."

CH.43 Assumptions…

The Celestianites raised their spears high, armor gleaming beneath the divine light filtering through the swirling clouds.

Thunder cracked as lightning carved jagged streaks through the sky. The city still floated — barely. Golden towers stood proud, though cracks ran through them like veins. The ground below, once radiant, was now soaked in blood. Fallen Lunaranites lay scattered, lifeless.

Their souls were already gone. And now, the crew's mission was clear: activate the Celestial Pillars and resurrect King Dreadixz and Incarceration. Blue light split the sky, piercing down like a divine warning.

Then came the storm again. Fake Lunaranites and nightmare-born beasts rained from the heavens, screeching through the clouds as they descended. Jaylen turned to Duke, sorrow written across his face. Duke stood tall in front of the beaten crew, watching the horror unfold above them — monsters falling like meteorites from the golden clouds. Jaylen clenched his fists.

"I'm sorry," Jaylen whispered. Duke gave him a firm nod. "Go," he replied. "Hope you live through this. Be careful!" Jaylen shouted before dashing off. The crew followed, sprinting past the Celestianites and the chaos unfolding all around. The monsters and imposters crashed into the earth with violent force, dirt and debris flying like confetti in a hellish parade.

Alien Birds — massive, otherworldly machines — descended, unleashing cannon fire. The crew dodged, flipped, and punched their way through waves of enemies. Far in the distance, the Room of Zeniths tower loomed, waiting.

Duke turned slowly, eyes narrowing at Overbrawl and Krane. Krane cracked his knuckles as violet spiritual energy surged through his arms like a storm held in flesh. Overbrawl stood next to him, casually dropping Olsen and his axe to the ground.

Olsen snatched the axe, bolting off after the crew. "DON'T SELL!" he yelled over his shoulder. Overbrawl didn't even blink.

He glanced at Krane. "You realize you're weaker without that fancy watch of yours, right?" Krane gave a smug grin.

"Overbrawl, you worry too much. Even without the watch… I'm still nearly king-tier." Duke cracked his neck, stretching his arms out with a grin.

"So… we throwing hands or what?" Krane stepped forward, laughing darkly. "You realize this is probably the worst idea you've ever had?" "Maybe," Duke said, eyes blazing, "but it's about to be your worst day." He pointed at Krane.

"Time to see what a neon Celestianite in bird armor can really do." Overbrawl lit his fists in roaring crimson flames, and Krane's arms ignited with a mix of fire and surging spiritual energy. Overbrawl raised an eyebrow and cracked a smile.

"I don't wanna hurt you, kid. You're still young. But if you're asking for a beatdown, Grandpa's gonna deliver it old-school." "YOU'RE MESSING WITH THE WRONG ONE!" Duke shouted. Green and black energy erupted from his body as he entered his stance.

His fists clenched tight, his aura crackling. Krane and Overbrawl squared up. Then — boom — Duke launched forward like a missile.

His fist collided with Krane's chest, creating a thunderous shockwave that sent Krane flying. Krane halted mid-air, energy blazing around him, then rocketed back like a purple streak. But before Duke could react — BAM! — Overbrawl slammed him with an explosive punch.

Duke went flying, crashing through multiple buildings like a human wrecking ball. He finally burst through the last one, jets flaring as he blasted back into the air. With a war cry, he tackled Overbrawl mid-air, slamming him into the ground, then launched skyward again.

Now it was an aerial war. Orange and green streaks shot across the heavens. They exchanged brutal punches mid-air, each blow releasing neon sparks and shockwaves. Duke twisted left, dragging Overbrawl with him, then veered right, then back again — smash! — crashing both of them through a massive golden skyscraper that split clean in half. As they tumbled out of the ruins, Overbrawl slammed his palm against Duke's chest — BOOM! — an explosion erupted, launching Duke backward at speeds faster than light.

He bounced off the ground, then flipped mid-air, landing on his feet, skidding across the golden streets, carving a glowing trail in his wake. Suddenly, Krane streaked toward him, flames licking around his feet. He struck — a flame-coated punch aimed at Duke's chest — but Duke blocked it with his arm, spun, and delivered a savage backhand. CRACK! Krane flipped across the battlefield like a ragdoll, but Duke wasn't done.

He launched after him, kicking Krane mid-air so hard it sent him flying across mountains, rock formations, and several golden towers. Krane skid across the city road, smashing through everything in his path. Then, silence.

A low rumble broke it. Duke turned — just in time to see it. A massive orange explosion rocketed toward him. His eyes widened — BOOOOM! — the blast hit. Buildings vanished, torn apart by the sheer force of one flaming shockwave. Through the inferno and destruction, Duke's silhouette emerged, still standing. Burning. Breathing. Ready.

He charged up his fists with blazing neon energy, spinning wildly like a human tornado before launching himself into the air with his rocket jets. In a flash, he tackled Overbrawl mid-air—the very dude who caused the massive explosion in the first place.

Duke twisted mid-air, grabbed Overbrawl, and hurled him straight down to the ground like a meteor. Overbrawl crashed with bone-jarring force—and just as the dust kicked up, Duke landed in front of him, throwing a vicious punch straight to his face.

He followed up with a brutal elbow strike, but before Overbrawl could recover, both of them lashed out with simultaneous roundhouse kicks.

BOOM! Their legs collided, igniting a massive neon green and dark orange shockwave that tore across the city, ripping buildings from their foundations and launching debris through the air like deadly confetti. Without missing a beat, Duke zipped around Overbrawl, backhanding him with enough force to echo, then launched a barrage of rapid punches that blurred into a flurry of pain. He ended it with a thunderous uppercut that sent Overbrawl rocketing into the sky—right as Krane boosted up too, aiming to intercept.

Duke didn't hesitate. Looking like a streak of neon green lightning, he chased after them, cutting across the sky. They danced through golden clouds laced with green, purple, and orange, tracing each other like celestial fighters in a light show gone rogue. Then—collision. Krane threw a punch, but Duke blocked it—barely. Then Overbrawl came flying in, landing a devastating explosion right into Duke's chest, sending him soaring across the sky like a ragdoll shot from a cannon. Krane teleported right behind Duke mid-air, grabbed his head, and slammed a brutal strike into his skull. Duke spiraled through the clouds like a broken comet, spinning and flailing—until he caught himself mid-air. WHOOOM! He stabilized with a shockwave so powerful, it bent the sky and sent cyclones twisting around him. A small neon orb formed between his hands, levitating as his eyes glowed a fierce, dark neon green.

He clapped his hands around the orb—SLAM—and the energy detonated, rattling the heavens. Then Duke hurled his hand forward. "NEON ABSENCE!" Five electric tendrils—like serpents of pure lightning—snapped into existence and wrapped around Krane. Duke twisted mid-air, swinging Krane straight into Overbrawl like a wrecking ball, then launched himself at both of them with a thunderous shout: "BLITZING SMASH!!" FLASH! The sky went pure white—and then a blazing black silhouette of Duke emerged from the void, teleporting right in front of them. With the force of an angry god, he SMACKED them both through the whiteness, triggering a massive neon explosion that collapsed in on itself before exploding outward with a shockwave so brutal, it cracked the clouds and shook the air like a sonic quake. Krane and Overbrawl were sent

hurtling down through the atmosphere like twin meteors. KRAKOOM! They crashed into the earth, leveling the battlefield with a blinding neon explosion that flattened everything around them. Duke landed in the center, eyes darting between the two wrecked warriors. Krane stood up slowly, wiped blood from his mouth, and gave a dark little smirk. "Not bad." He teleported in front of Duke and began spinning violently—time suddenly slowed down. The whole scene dipped into a purple hue as the world itself seemed to hold its breath.

Mid-spin, Krane's leg ignited with blazing spiritual energy. His eyes flared bright violet as he roared: "SPIRITUAL MAINTENANCE!" He tornado-kicked Duke with such force, it shattered every single rib in his body. Bone, gone. Structure, annihilated. Then Overbrawl appeared in a burst of flame behind Duke and rocketed into the sky, his body now crackling with wild, chaotic orange energy. His eyes glowed bright red—like two flares burning with fury. He stopped mid-air, forming a massive glowing orb above him, sparking like a mini sun. As it spun faster and faster, he grinned and shouted: "CHAOTIC DESTINY!!!" Chaotic orange blasts began raining from the sky like meteorites from hell. Boom. Boom. Boom. They fell faster than the speed of light, hammering the battlefield below. Each blast created titanic explosions and devastating shockwaves, leveling buildings one by one—the same ones Don just fixed, mind you. Tragic. The wind went berserk, whipping everything apart. Duke screamed through the storm of madness and pain, energy coursing through his veins like fire. And then— silence. The chaos stopped. The sky stilled. And Duke was still standing. He turned to where the Pre-Heroes have been running. They were heading towards the Room of Zeniths tower, and he smirked as he watched Olsen, Prince, Demaurion, Archie, Ella, and Eli sprinting. He smiled through the weight of the situations, bloodied all over, but he still felt like he could fight. He whispered, "Go get em' kids…"

The silence of space screamed between us. Dark Don and I stood face-to-face, our fists clenched tight, trembling with pure, unchecked energy. Our transformations lit up the obsidian void like twin novas. The vastness of

the cosmos wrapped around us—endless, quiet, waiting. Stars shimmered above like shards of broken glass scattered across an infinite ocean.

Below our feet, the silver surface of the moon glistened, polished by cosmic dust that drifted like whispers in the wind. Earth hovered in the distance, suspended between us, like a fragile reminder of everything at stake. The silence broke with a low growl.

Dark Don's eyes—glowing, hollow, seething with white-hot lunar rage—pierced through me.

Lunar energy flared wildly around his form, wrapping him in an aura that flickered like wildfire.

He looked like a god born from a dying star. My own celestial aura crackled in response, sharp sparks zipping through the air. The spiked strands of my hair rose and glowed with lavender power, my tail twitching behind me, mirroring the chaos in my chest. He exhaled sharply through his nose, shaking his head as he lowered his fighting stance.

I blinked, confused, keeping my guard up. Then he slowly raised his hand, staring at it… and turned away from me.

Toward Earth. He looked down at the moon's surface, then back up to the swirling light of the Milky Way, which gleamed in a hypnotic violet hue.

The stars stretched across the galaxy like a living painting—each one pulsing in vibrant colors: crimson, gold, icy blue, burning orange. I felt the air around us grow heavier as he clenched his fists.

Something deep in him was unraveling. BOOOOM! He stomped the ground—no, shattered it. The sound wasn't just loud—it was cosmic. My ears rang as the vibrations rippled through the moon's crust, sending a shockwave that kicked up lunar dust like a silver blizzard. My knees buckled for half a second. My instincts screamed, but I stood firm. He started marching toward me. His expression? Murderous. But not just the usual, "I wanna win this fight" type. Nah, this was personal. Like every scar he ever had was bleeding through his face. I rolled my eyes and locked into my stance. "Where even are you from? You said back at Insane Middle School that you're some 'copy' of me from another universe, right? Didn't

you?!" He scoffed mid-stride, voice low and bitter. "Yeah," he muttered.

"What's it to you?" My brow furrowed.

"Then why are you on Earth? Why would someone like you—a whole other-universe version of me—be a Lunaranite soldier? Second in command, even? That doesn't add up." That stopped him. He didn't turn back to me right away. Instead, he stared into the void, his silhouette bathed in starlight. He turned his head, eyes locked onto the glow of the Milky Way. His voice softened, almost like it wasn't even meant for me to hear.

"I wasn't from Earth… not originally. I used to live on a planet called Planet Night. A place that was the opposite of Earth. No sunshine. No warmth. Just shadows and storms and stars that never blinked out. Everyone there was like me—dark purple dragons with obsidian scales. We could shift into human hybrids, or full human forms. I was only 8… and already a scientist."

My chest tightened. For a second, he didn't sound like a villain. He sounded like a broken kid trying to explain why he stopped believing in good.

"I had an assistant—Silicia. We were… close. I promised her that if I ever got my work done, we'd leave the lab. Just the two of us. Explore the stars."

His eyes flickered with pain, and he clenched his fists tighter. "But we weren't normal scientists. We were illegal. I created things—biohazards, creatures—stuff that could tear apart a world. I didn't do it to destroy… I wanted to save people. But Planet Night didn't care. They labeled us criminals. Me and Silicia hid in a basement for years, my lab buried beneath rubble.

And one day… we left. I built a ship. We launched into the stars. It was supposed to be a new beginning." He paused. Then another BOOM—his foot cracked the ground again, sending another ripple through the moon. "But they found us. The Night Cops. Relentless. We were chased. Silicia was terrified, so I held her close. I told her everything was gonna be fine. But they shot our ship down." I gasped, involuntarily. My hands trembled.

"We crash-landed into Avangard… Iris Town. Both of us were out cold for three months. Scientists found us. Angel… he was one of them. I was trapped in a stasis tube. Silicia broke me out.

We fled to Scarletsville… then Foreshade." He finally turned back to me. His eyes weren't glowing anymore—they were just empty. "I enrolled in Foreshade Academy. I wanted to be second-in-command under Dreadixz. I idolized him. Thought he was powerful. Respected. But… school wasn't what I imagined. Everyone laughed. Said I was an alien. And they weren't wrong. They mocked Silicia too. I didn't speak. Not a word. Not even 'mama.' I just fought. Anyone who bothered us—bam. I snapped." He stared at the ground like he was watching the past bleed out onto the dust. "Silicia always tried to calm me down. Said violence wasn't the way. Told me, 'The only way you'll fix anything is if you solve it with your mind.' So… I tried. I really tried. I started talking. Started… healing." I swallowed hard. My stance faltered. I felt like I was looking in a cracked mirror that showed every version of me that had given up.

"But when we turned 11, everything changed. The Celestianite Scouts mistook us for Lunaranites. They came after us. We ran to the Forbidden Forest of Foreshade. I used my ability to transform… disguised myself as a baby dragon to look helpless. Silicia carried me… ran as fast as she could." His voice cracked. "She hid me under a pile of leaves… and I watched. I watched them stab her through the throat." He looked at me—finally. And I saw it. Not rage. Not pride. Grief.

"The first word I ever spoke… was her name." "…Silicia." Dark Don trudged toward me, his whole body trembling with rage, his Ultra Form surging with untamed power. He pointed at me like I was a curse written in flesh. "THIS IS EXACTLY WHY I HATE CELESTIANITES, DON! EXACTLY WHY!" he roared.

"I'VE CAUSED GENOCIDE FOR TWO YEARS NOW—TWO!—EVER SINCE THAT DAY! THEN I GOT SELECTED AS SECOND IN COMMAND, AND THAT GENOCIDE? IT GREW. IT GREW BECAUSE OF THEM. BECAUSE OF YOU. BECAUSE YOU'RE A CELESTIANITE!"

And then, something I never expected. He fell to his knees. His Ultra

Form flickered like a broken flame. The silver glow from the moons above hit his face, and I could see it—his pain wasn't just rage. It was grief. Deep, paralyzing grief.

"THE LUNARANITES WEREN'T THE VILLAINS… THEY WERE!" His voice cracked like shattered crystal. "THEY KILLED SOMEONE I LOVED. SOMEONE WHO SAW ME WHEN I WAS INVISIBLE TO EVERYONE ELSE. WHO GUIDED ME THROUGH LIFE. WHO CARED. REALLY CARED. WHO—" He choked on his words. His mouth twitched. His fists clenched.

Then he stared into the glowing silver surface of the moon beneath us, like it was a mirror to a life he lost.

"She loved me…" he said.

His voice didn't echo—it tore through the air like thunder. "More than a friend…" And then he bit his lip, looked down, and clutched his arm. I saw his face burn red—was he actually blushing? "And I… I loved her too…" he whispered. Yo. I swear my jaw almost hit the floor. Dark Don? The guy who drop-kicks comets into supernovas? He's out here… confessing his love life to me? Normally I'd be like "BOY WHAT—" but I didn't even wanna ruin his moment. Because… damn. It hurt. He stared at me. No, through me. Through my hands that were shaking like leaves. I didn't even notice it until then. My body trembled like it knew something before my brain caught up. He wasn't just mad. He wasn't just broken. He was right. And it hit me like a cosmic uppercut to the soul.

"Are we…" I whispered, not to him, not to anyone.

"…I guess we really are the bad guys…"

The words left my mouth before I could stop them. I felt something inside me shift. Like the floor under my beliefs cracked a little. I reached my hand out, voice quiet but honest. "Dark Don… I can help." He snapped.

"NEVER!" His voice exploded, ripping the silence apart. "You'll never understand! YOUR TRIBE KILLED THE ONLY THING I HAD! THE BEST THING I EVER HAD!" Then—whoooosh—a giant Lunar sword manifested in his hand, radiating cold fury and silver lightning. He raised it, eyes glowing like twin eclipses. "Now I'm gonna make sure I kill the

best thing they've ever had."

CH.44 A Fight on Good Ol' Luna in a Celestial Domain

We stood across from each other, both of us suspended between Earth and its shining satellite, the Moon. Celestial and lunar energy crackled around us like a thunderstorm from another dimension. Our eyes locked, sharpened with raw determination.

I glared at Dark Don, fury simmering under my skin as I clenched my fists. The wind howled around us, stirred by our energy. "Dark Don… I'm here to help you. You need help. So why are you pushing it away?" His face twisted with rage, his voice cracking with grief as he screamed, "I'm rejecting it for a damn good reason! Silicia is gone! I don't give a damn about the prophecies, the legends, or any of that stupid CL War garbage! I don't care if the Lunaranites and Celestianites tear each other apart! I ONLY CARE ABOUT DESTROYING THE CELESTIANITES! THEY TOOK SILICIA FROM ME! THEY'RE THE REASON I'M LIKE THIS!" His words hit like meteors. But I didn't back down. My voice surged with equal intensity.

"You took the path of revenge! You gave in! Instead of coping, you chose to become this!" "YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND, DON!" he roared again, louder this time, his voice trembling.

"You could never understand! Silicia meant something to me… she was everything!"

My teeth clenched hard enough to crack. My fury blazed in my eyes as I stared him down. He slowly began to rise into the air, lunar energy

surging around him like a stormcloud ready to explode. "If they took the only good thing I had left…" he growled, "…then I'll take EVERYTHING THEY HAVE!"

His Ultra Form lit up with blazing silver and shadowy lunar energy. I launched off the ground, almost violently. My violet eyes burned into his soul, glowing like twin stars. Celestial energy flickered violently around my body as divine markings shifted and danced over my skin.

"Fine. If you won't accept my help… then I WON'T OFFER IT ANYMORE!" "BRING IT ON!!!" he screamed. We launched at each other, blitzing like two divine comets. One glowing white. The other, violet. Our fists collided mid-air—and BOOOOOOM! A nova-sized explosion erupted from the clash, blasting a shockwave that shook the Moon to its core. Craters cracked. Dust flew. I was launched backward from the impact, tumbling like a comet, rolling across the lunar surface like a bolt of lightning.

I smashed through a massive silver spire, its pieces scattering across the stars. Before I could fully recover, Dark Don teleported right in front of me. His right hook met my jaw, then his left slammed my ribs. But I warped behind him, yelling, "CELESTIAL AERIAL KICK!"

My leg connected with his gut, launching him into orbit. A brilliant violet shockwave exploded from the impact, sending him flipping through the sky like a white streak tearing across space. I shot upward, leaving a shockwave behind, teleporting directly in front of him mid-flight and tackling him with full force. "HEY!" he grunted as we spiraled toward the Moon's surface. We barreled through a jagged mountain, shattering it into cosmic rubble, then separated mid-air. I hit the ground hard, tumbling violently past a barrage of flashing moon spires, my momentum carving a sonic trench across the surface. Dark Don blazed toward me in the sky, faster than light. He appeared again—right hook, left hook, then a devastating aerial kick that launched me up only for him to hurricane-kick me straight back down. I skid across the surface on my back, then spun to the side, catching him as he teleported again with a gut punch aimed at me.

I grabbed his arm mid-swing, time slowing. I twisted behind him and SLAMMED him into the ground so hard the impact formed a crater. He rebounded skyward. I rocketed after him like celestial lightning, fists glowing bright. I punched him in the stomach, sending him flying again—this time through the stars.

He halted mid-air, his aura flaring violently. We both blasted toward each other, elbows clashing with a thunderous snap. I spun, trying to backhand him. He ducked and went for an uppercut. I teleported behind him, attempting a hurricane kick. He blocked with one arm, and our fists collided again.

He retaliated with a lightning-fast punch—I twirled into a tornado kick and launched him spinning through space.

He spiraled between planets like a ragdoll flung by the gods. I blitzed toward him, looking like a bright comet streaking across the cosmos. I curved around Venus to get momentum and tackled him mid-air once again. With a war cry, I rocketed down toward Venus' surface, my hands locked around his neck. He thrashed, teeth gritted, until—BOOM!

We smashed into the orange rock, carving a new crater into the planet.

Before I could rise, he kicked me with both legs and launched me skyward like a shooting star. At the edge of the atmosphere, he teleported above me, yelling as he SMACKED me back down. I hit the ground like a meteor—crater mode: activated. Shaking my head, I stood up just as he reappeared. He wrapped around me like a missile and BLITZED through the planet. Volcano after volcano exploded as he slammed me through each one, lava erupting in all directions. Mid-air, he telekinetically grabbed my throat. I froze, choking, suspended in space. He smirked.

"Alright… you had your fun. Now let me show you my way of ending this." BOOM! He teleported again—SLAMMING me into the side of a volcano, the impact shaking the mountain and sending magma flying. Still holding me, he barreled straight through the entire volcano, my body crashing against rocks and molten heat. We burst out the other side, and he hurled me toward the ground like a comet. I flipped, skidding hard across the terrain. Before I could react—BAM! He appeared in front of

me and struck my face with a lunar-infused punch. The force hurled me straight through the stars. I saw planets blur past me. Then he dropped to the ground, skidding to a stop. Charging his entire body with lunar energy, he raised a hand and screamed: "LUNAR INFERIOR!!!" His palm slammed into the ground, unleashing a catastrophic shockwave. Cracks—white, jagged, and glowing—splintered across the orange terrain. Then… they began to rise. LUNAR SPIKES. Giant, jagged pillars of lunar energy burst from the cracks, homing in on me at impossible speed. I screamed, charging up with Celestial energy, golden light bursting from my body. I darted through the air toward the spikes, fists blazing. Power surged in my arms like galaxies being born. And I roared, "ULTRA KX'S SUPERSTARS!!!"

My blinding violet fists slammed into the spiked trail ahead of me, and the impact was so violent, a shockwave burst out from my knuckles, ripping across the terrain like an angry god just clapped. The spikes exploded in a domino of destruction, each one shattering with a CRACK-CRACK-CRACK as Venus itself quaked.

The shockwave rippled outward, racing toward Dark Don like vengeance with a grudge. He barely had a second. BOOOOM. The shockwave caught him DEAD ON, compressing around his body like a pressure bomb before detonating in a blinding, soul-snapping explosion. It rocked Venus again, and I didn't wait. I blasted into the air, no hesitation, straight into space—straight after him. Dark Don tried to boost away, but I was already there. We locked eyes mid-orbit, two cosmic demons, face-to-face in the void. Then—boom. We charged. One clash.

Two. Three. Four. FIVE. Our fists collided again—mine laced with celestial wrath, his with lunar destruction—and the punch created a massive hyper—shockwave, sending both of us spiraling through space like ragdolls caught in a star's death. I wiped the daze off and BLASTED forward, stars streaking past me. But Dark Don had already summoned something wild—his fists clenched, and suddenly a giant glowing white lunar sphere formed in his palm. It was screaming with energy. "LUNAR SPIRITS!" he roared, his voice echoing through space like a warhorn.

The sphere unleashed four twisting beams of silvery-white light, shaped like shadowy humanoid wraiths. They spiraled, merged mid-flight, and morphed into a snarling lunar dragon, its jaws wide open as it flew at me like a rabid comet. I didn't flinch. My eyes IGNITED with celestial glow. I clapped my hands together with the force of a galaxy imploding—CLAP!—and the dragon beam disintegrated, fizzled into stardust like it never existed. Dark Don wasn't done. He started snapping—once… twice… backward… forward… and then one final snap that made reality glitch.

His body warped and he was IN MY FACE. Light-speed attack. No hesitation. GUT PUNCH. I choked on air. He teleported behind me, froze time, and unloaded—dozens of punches to my back in frozen stasis. Then, without mercy, he conjured a massive lunar arrow, shimmering with sharp white energy, and fired it into my chest.

KA-KRAKOOOM!! A nova shockwave burst out, blinding and loud, rattling the stars and planets like cymbals in God's orchestra. I went flying, tumbling through the void— —but I clenched my fists, shook it off, screamed: "RAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!" I torpedoed at him. We collided again—once, twice—and our fists exploded with power, sending us SLAMMING into Mars. Dust flew. We rebounded. Jupiter. BAM. Uranus. FLASH. Saturn. BOOM. Pluto. SNAP. Then our punches connected again—so hard we shattered space itself.

We fell into a distorted version of Neptune.

The sky was blue but glitchy, clouds swirling violently like someone hacked the atmosphere. Winds screamed. Time twisted. And I LOST IT. I howled as I powered up, then blitzed him—two punches straight to the jaw, followed by a devastating overhead kick, flipping mid-air into a backhand swipe that slapped him like thunder. I grabbed his head and hurled him through the chaotic storm, ripping through the glitch clouds. He blitzed back—tried to flash kick me. Missed. Lunar tendrils whipped out, grabbed me, yanked me in. He BACKHANDED MY FACE like a boss. Then came the hurricane kick—a spinning leg that SLAMMED me down through Neptune's clouds like I was nothing. I crashed. Sky ruptured. We

both LAUNCHED. Mid-air clash explosion.

The clouds reformed violently behind us. We danced—teleporting, clashing, teleporting, fighting like two divine lights caught in a death spiral. Punches and kicks flew. Speed unmeasurable. The stars? Just a blur. He threw a storm of punches— I dodged every. Single. One. Ultra instinct mode.

Activated. He went for a face strike— I DUCKED— SPIN KICK TO THE RIBS. I spun so fast, I looked like a whole-ass celestial vortex. Then— CELESTIAL TORNADO KICK. His ribs cracked. I dropped down, gathered air, and LEAPT up—slow-mo spin—then unleashed a full-on: B-TWIST KICK.

My legs glowed—BOOOOM! Celestial shockwave ERUPTED out, cracking the very atmosphere, warping reality back to normal, dragging us out of the glitchverse. The solar system reloaded. Planets aligned again. Dark Don? He got YEETED. Like, YEETED-yeeted. His body shot across the sky like a meteor on full send.

Uranus—CRASH. Saturn—BOOM. Jupiter—RIP. Mars—DESTRUCTION. Venus—GLASS CANNON SHATTER. And finally— THE MOON. I floated there, panting in Ultra Form, my whole body wrapped in radiant celestial energy. The sky around me shimmered with violet light, and my fists still glowed from the Celestial Tornado Kick that literally bent physics. I looked around, breathing heavy like I just finished ten boss battles at once. Then… something stirred in my chest. A pull. A feeling. I turned my gaze toward Earth—and I saw it.

Down below, in Celestia, racing across the celestial battlefield towards the massive Celestial Pillars, was my whole crew—my family.

Olsen was bulldozing through a horde of corrupted Lunaranite clones with his rock-armored fists, Prince was zapping the sky like a human thunderstorm, Demaurion was swinging his leviathan-powered tail like a wrecking ball, and Archie—of course—was getting tossed into enemies like a living grenade. Jocabed was freezing nightmarish monsters mid-air, Sophia screamed a sonic wave that burst them apart, and Angel was warping in and out of portals like a glitchy owl ninja. Ella was leading the

charge, slicing through shadows with pinpoint strikes.

And don't even get me started on the alien birds dive-bombing like they were possessed by cosmic demons. They were outnumbered. They were getting swarmed. But they weren't backing down. I clenched my fists, violet sparks crackling around me. "They need me," I whispered, my voice echoing through the void. But then… behind me… A low growl echoed through the silence. CRACK. The moon rippled. A pulse of dark lunar energy surged through the cracks as a shadowy figure slowly stood up in the middle of the crater. Dark Don. He was torn, bleeding lunar light, but his expression?

Still smug. He brushed dust off his shoulder like this whole planetary beatdown was just a warm-up. He looked up at me, his eyes glowing white-hot with rage and adrenaline. "You really think this is over?" he growled, his voice low and hungry. "Round Two, Celestianite. Before you run back to your little planet."

My heart thudded in my chest. I looked back toward Eart. Back at my friends. Back at the fight that still raged. And then I turned to him, floating in the stars, fists clenched, wings flared wide, Ultra energy burning brighter than ever. "…I don't run," I said, my voice like thunder in the vacuum of space. I rocketed forward, splitting space with my speed, heading straight for him— TO BE CONTINUED…

CH.45 The Chaotic Race Towards a Chaotic Risk

Bodies flew through the golden-tinted air like ragdolls in a divine blender.

Golden lightning split the yellow, shimmering clouds above, crackling down with vengeance. Blood spattered across broken stones and scorched skies.

Screams echoed, war cries rang out, and the sounds of slashes, stabs, and roars painted the battlefield in pure carnage. The squad sprinted across the chaotic warzone, grouped tightly, bolting toward the Celestial Pillars like it was the last checkpoint in the universe.

Jaylen, breathing heavy and eyes locked forward, suddenly backflipped mid-stride, morphing into his Dream Dragon form mid-air. His wings erupted outward, flaring with ethereal energy as he shot into the sky like a comet. "Let's make some noise!" he growled, ascending like a dream-fueled missile. Below, the battlefield was absolute insanity.

Celestianites and Lunaranites clashed in massive waves, and it was nearly impossible to tell who was winning. Olsen went full beast mode, plowing through enemy dragons like a runaway bulldozer. His hammer spun wildly in his fists, slamming down with bone-crunching force.

else transformed into their beast forms like it was morphin' time. Mason tore through Lunaranites with his bear claws, literally ripping them limb from limb. Fedjina, now a golden falcon of fury, dive-bombed from above, releasing explosive bursts of golden energy that lit up the sky.

Archie (you know, chaos incarnate) launched himself upward with a fiery self-detonation, flipping mid-air and hurling a meteor-sized fireball across the battlefield that obliterated three Lunaranites mid-laugh. Above the madness, Jaylen weaved through the bullets, blasts, and incoming Alien Birds. His face twisted in frustration as he scanned the endless chaos ahead.

"WE'RE NOT EVEN CLOSE!" he roared, dodging a flaming spear mid-sentence. Flying next to him, William—in sleek Pterodactyl form—grimaced as he peered ahead.

The Celestial Pillars were still dots on the horizon, barely visible beyond the ocean of enemies. Jaylen ducked under another Alien Bird, blasted it with a focused Dream Beam, then spiraled in mid-air to keep momentum.

He barrel-rolled, flipped, corkscrewed sideways, then hit a horizontal drift to BOOST forward. "I'm flying like a lunatic and it's still not close enough!" he groaned. Suddenly, a streak of blue lightning zipped below—Prince, moving like a damn thunderbolt.

"YO, DON'T SWEAT IT!" Prince yelled, throwing up a confident thumbs-up mid-run. "I GOT THIS, DREAM BOY!" Jaylen chuckled, "Show-off," and veered to the side.

Down below, Prince was a blur. Moving faster than sound, he flipped, dodged, and drop-kicked anything in his path. Lunaranites didn't even get a chance to react—they were slapped into orbit or sent spinning into their comrades like dominoes on turbo mode. He jumped, spun mid-air, and flash-kicked one Lunaranite straight into the upper atmosphere. Then, in a move so anime should've6 had a slow-mo zoom-in, he stopped, grinned, and whispered: "Time to crank it up."

Lightning danced around his eyes. He dashed forward again—harder, faster. His feet were just thunderclaps now, smacking the earth in sonic pulses. As Lunaranites closed in with spears, he dodged, punched, and drop-spin-kicked like a storm given human form.

He conjured an electrical shield, plowing through the crowd like a shockwave on legs, vaporizing everything in his path. Then he leapt, yeeted the shield like Captain America with ADHD, and fired off electric

disks that exploded on contact—blinding flashes of white and blue tearing through the mobs. He snapped his fingers. BOOM. A thunderstorm erupted above.

To him, the clouds turned gray, roiling and violent. To everyone else? Still glowing gold. Lightning speared down in rhythmic strikes, vaporizing monster after monster.

Thunder shook the earth like a heartbeat of the gods. And still, Prince ran. Close—so close—to the Celestial Pillars. — Meanwhile… Krane backhanded Duke so hard, the poor guy flew like a wrecking ball into a skyscraper.

Glass exploded, walls cracked, and Duke bounced through an entire floor before crashing into an office full of glowing computers. Smoke poured from his busted cannon. He groaned, shaking his head, rising to his knees. "Dang it… stupid robot arm…" Floating through the hole like he was on his villain arc finale, Krane hovered with his arms crossed and a smug grin. "You really thought you could handle the power of a Zenith? Adorable."

Duke stood, glaring. "You're not laying a single finger on those kids…"

Krane just smirked. Then— "KRANE!!" a voice shouted. Overbrawl stood below, waving his arm. Krane rolled his eyes. "What now, muscle-brain?"

Overbrawl pointed, wide-eyed. Krane turned… and saw it. A blue lightning streak cutting through the entire army. Prince. Krane's smile faded. His gaze followed the path of destruction, right to the Celestial Pillars. And his brain clicked.

The pillars were the key. If Prince reached them, it was over. Krane clenched his fists. "Duke said they'd awaken Dreadixz and Incarceration… if we lose those pillars—" He vanished. Teleportation. Reappeared right next to Overbrawl, energy crackling around his arm.

"Let's kill him already," Krane growled. Overbrawl grinned, his own hand igniting with chaotic fire. "Bet." The two locked eyes, then slammed their fists together. BOOM. An enormous fireball of chaos and spirit swirled above them—blazing, volatile, unstable.

Then… They yanked their arms back, charging the energy until it roared like a dying star. They screamed in sync: "CHAOTIC SPIRITS!!!" And the ground split.

The fiery beam launched into the sky like a sunbeam from hell, headed straight for Prince—who didn't even flinch. The firebeam roared to life, lighting up the entire battlefield like a freaking solar flare gone rogue. Every warrior in their beast form turned to look—but only for a split second—before diving out of the way. Even Jocabed, who usually kept it cool, yelped and launched herself backward as the inferno tore through the air like a flaming banshee on crack.

The beam slammed into the ground and raced forward, cutting across the field at breakneck speeds. It didn't move—it hunted.

The air distorted with heat, the colors of orange and purple mixing into a wildfire blur that ripped through Lunaranites, vaporizing anything in its way without an ounce of mercy. Screams echoed, bodies dropped, and chaos erupted in its wake.

Through the smoke and flashing lights, Angel appeared in mid-air, hurling Lunaranites into different dimensions like it was Tuesday. He snapped his head around, eyes wide.

"PRINCE! BEHIND YOU!!"

Prince was already mid-charge, blitzing through Lunaranites with blue lightning crackling around his fists. He heard the warning, turned his head slightly and— "Hm?" His eyes widened. Behind him, the beam. And not just a beam—this thing looked like a supernova on legs, a predator locked on target. "AW HELL NAH—!!" Prince shouted, his voice nearly drowned by the roaring firestorm. He spun forward and BOOKED IT. His feet hit the ground like thunderclaps. Lightning exploded from his heels as trails of blue sparks lit the battlefield.

The terrain got wild—bumps, hills, debris—but Prince didn't stop. He vaulted over boulders, slid under claws, flipped, kicked, punched, twisted—Lunaranites got yeeted like bowling pins.

"Gotta move… or I'm toast!" he thought, sweat flying off his brow as lightning wrapped around his arms and surged into his hands. His legs

blurred—gone. His eyes lit up with crackling energy. "FASTER!!!" he screamed—and he did just that.

Now he was a literal bolt, shooting across the battlefield, jumping so high he looked like a blue comet in the night. His dreads whipped like wild flags in the wind. Overbrawl and Krane, trying to control the beam, were sweating bullets.

"GO! GO FASTER!" they yelled, desperation in their eyes.

Prince landed hard, kept sprinting, then blinked—he was already near the Room of Zeniths. "Almost there…" he muttered, glancing back at the death-beam on his tail.

He smirked, spun mid-run to face it while running backwards, and shouted, "HEY! WANNA PLAY TAG?! COME CATCH ME, LAME-FLAME!" He whipped around, and the world cut to black. Boom—he entered a void. The domain turned deep navy blue.

Metallic floor. No walls. Just endless nothingness.

But he kept running. He knew this place. His mind started flashing through memories—his friends, their battles, their laughs, their pain. Then he blinked again—he was back. Back in Celestial, feet slamming the earth. The tower was right there.

His body surged. 100,000% ELECTRICITY. His eyes glowed like dying stars. His legs? Nonexistent. Just streaks of raw speed and crackling energy. He BLASTED up the side of the Room of Zeniths, running vertically now like a goddamn glitch in the matrix. The beam followed, now howling like a banshee as it gained speed. "COME ON!!" Prince roared. "COME ON!!!" Overbrawl and Krane echoed. "COME ONNNNNN!!" the whole squad screamed from the ground.

Prince gritted his teeth so hard his gums bled. He clenched his fists and started disintegrating physics. He was now a living blur, faster than light, a sonic paradox with feathers. The beam got closer—dangerously close—almost licking his tail feathers. He felt its heat on his back. "Not today…" he muttered. Then—he did something no one had ever seen him do.

"RAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!" he screamed, louder

than thunder as he blasted into the CLOUDS THEMSELVES. The sky cracked open. He sprinted on the clouds like they were solid ground. The clouds burned behind him. The lightning around him grew more violent, wrapping his entire body until he was a full-on, glowing Lightning Avatar.

A literal humanoid bolt. And then… mid-air, in slow motion… He struck a running stance. With a smirk and a primal roar, he shouted: "SOOOOOOOONIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIC—" "BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!!!" He detonated. A colossal sonic boom rippled across the planet, launching everyone off their feet.

Wind spiraled into a hurricane. Buildings shook. The beam FLIPPED mid-air from the force and kept coming—but Prince? Prince wasn't done. He pushed harder. Ran higher. Screamed louder. Everyone below watched with bated breath as he climbed—no, catapulted—toward the Celestial Pillars at the tower's summit. He reached the top.

Launched himself like a rocket. And just when the beam almost caught his tail—he shot into the sky, breaking atmosphere, becoming a star. Everyone froze. Necks craned. Eyes widened. Hearts pounded. All attention locked on the sky—on him. Prince.

His hoodie whipped in the wind, flailing like a banner of rebellion. His lightning-charged shoes sparked and flickered, barely holding together. Dirt-smeared, scraped up, bruised to hell—but still standing. And smiling. He looked down, spotting it: the Celestial Pillar, glowing with a radiant green gem embedded at its heart. His eyes locked on target.

"There it is." That cocky grin spread across his face. "Time to end this." Then— BOOM. He blasted down from the clouds like a divine missile, the sky screaming behind him as he pierced through it. A thunderous shockwave rattled the heavens.

The beam—wild, chaotic, a roaring inferno of destruction—chased after him like a demon unchained. The final race had begun. Prince SLAMMED into the ground like living lightning, a crater forming beneath his feet at the base of the Celestial Pillars.

Dirt and energy exploded outward. He didn't stop. He dashed, streaking straight for the green pillar like a man possessed. "GET IT, PRINCE!"

Angel shouted, still fighting off hordes.

"COME ON, BRO!" Duke roared, fists clenched. The crowd went silent, time slowed. Even the Lunaranites—creatures of chaos and bloodlust—paused, baffled, confused, watching. Prince vaulted into the air, twisting over the pillar like a lightning acrobat, the beam screeching right behind him, breathing down his neck. Slow motion. Mouths opened in gasps.

Whispers turned into yells. The world held its breath. And then—BOOOOOOM. Prince's fist SLAMMED into the green gem—cracking it with pure raw thunder energy. Not even a millisecond later, the beam caught up— —and collided head-on with the gem.

The world. Went. White. An explosion of color detonated from the pillar—green, white, blue, gold—every color imaginable blasted across the sky, melting together like cosmic paint.

The shockwave shook the universe, slicing through clouds, air, even time itself. Alien birds flying high above were instantly vaporized, the atmosphere cracked, the heavens screamed. It was like God had thrown a tantrum. The shockwave slammed into the earth. The wind didn't just howl—it roared. A hurricane spun out of the energy, hurling everyone into the air. Trees snapped. Buildings shattered. The battlefield turned into a blender of chaos and energy.

Lightning danced.

The sky bled light.

And in the middle of it all…

Prince was falling.

His body plummeted from the heavens like a broken star. His hoodie flapped wildly. His arms limp. His body spun, crashing through golden rocks like a ragdoll in a pinball machine until— CRACK. He slammed into the side of a massive golden spire.

The impact echoed through the mountains. His body finally stopped, crumpling face-down in the dust. Silence. His fingers twitched.

His eyes squinted open, weak, bloodied, but alive. He slowly looked up—through the dust, the wind, the chaos—and saw it. The Room of Zeniths tower.

Still standing. Still glowing. Activated. He grinned through the pain. Broken, battered, but victorious. He did it. The crowd fell into an eerie silence. Was he… dead or alive? Overbrawl collapsed, finally succumbing to exhaustion after unleashing a massive attack that, unfortunately, did nothing. Krane caught him just in time, cradling him in his arms.

Whispers rippled through the crowd—fake Lunaranites, Celestianites, even the crew. A sea of murmurs. Then… silence again.

Olsen, standing right at the edge of the crowd, slowly stepped forward, gripping his hammer tightly. He made his way to Prince, who was slumped face-down against a rock, unmoving. With one tap of his hammer—nothing. Another tap—still nothing…

Then in a flash, Prince shot up and immediately broke into the Gangnam Style dance, hollering, "I DID IT! I DID IT! DID YOU GUYS SEE THAT?! I DID IT!"

He kept shuffling across the battlefield like he was auditioning for a decade-late K-pop comeback. The fake Lunaranites groaned in unison, clearly done, and instantly raised their spears in collective disgust. Olsen let out the world's heaviest sigh, looking like he was one second away from physically knocking some sense into Prince.

He turned toward him with a deadpan stare and snapped, "Are you serious right now?! We legit thought you were dead! Like—flatline, donezo, buried-in-a-music-video DEAD!" Prince just shrugged and flopped back against the rock like it was a recliner. "Well, guess I'm not. Isn't that nice?" he muttered with a smug grin. Olsen shook his head, somewhere between exasperated and ready to retire. Then, cutting through the weirdness, Ella's voice rang out—sharp, urgent: "LOOK!"

CH.46 The Return of Insane X, and King Dreadixz

A radiant green beam burst from the Regeneration Pillar—one of the towering Celestial Pillars of Avangard. It shot straight into the sky with a sound like a god's sneeze amplified through a megaphone. BOOM! The heavens trembled as the beam exploded into a brilliant bloom of emerald light, sending a shockwave racing across the sky like a tidal wave of color and power. Everyone below paused.

Eyes widened. Mouths dropped. Even the nightmarish monsters paused their rampage for a second to say, "Wait, what?" The shockwave was massive.

Like, planet-wide massive. It rippled across Avangard, shaking mountains, bending trees, and touching the farthest corners. The dead blinked awake in confusion, brushing off dust and going, "Wasn't I…?" Celestianites who'd been down for the count twice got up like it was just a nap. The nightmare creatures didn't die, but they definitely felt awkward and uncomfortable about this whole shiny green light situation.

And then, there was Jocabed—stepping forward, staring up at the vibrant sky. She whispered, "Ohhh… shhhhiit…" The golden clouds above glowed even brighter, lit up like the grand finale of a heavenly fireworks show. Lightning fizzled out. Thunder packed up and left. Even the wind paused to say, "Yo this is kinda beautiful."

Power clenched his fists, feeling the spark of destiny in his bones. "Alright, this is it, everyone…" Krane and Overbrawl joined him, staring

skyward, soaking in the glow. Far above, inside a wobbling golden building that looked like it had skipped leg day, Duke stood near the giant hole Krane had smashed through earlier.

The light washed over him, casting long shadows. At first, he looked inspired… but then his expression shifted. His eyes dropped from the sky to the battlefield. "…We better get ready," he muttered, "like… now." And then… POP! Somewhere on the golden ground, Incarceration's eyes snapped open. Just the eyes.

The rest of him? Still very much in pieces. His head was sitting by itself on the ground like a dropped bowling ball. His crimson eyes blinked twice, looked around, then narrowed. "Huh," he muttered. "I seem to be… detached." Around him, everyone tensed. The entire squad of Celestianites turned slowly toward the talking severed head like it had just told a bad joke at a funeral. Spears were raised. Elements flared. Weapons drawn. "Ohhh boy," muttered Archie. "Here we go again…" Incarceration, completely unfazed, glanced around casually like a tourist in a weird museum. Then, with cartoonish determination, he started rolling. Thump. Thump. Thump.

"Pardon me… excuse me… just heading back to my torso…" His head bumped over rocks, skidded past a shocked Lunaranite who dropped their lunch, and finally clicked into place on his neck with a satisfying, magical "DING!" Incarceration stood up like a marionette getting yanked by invisible strings—his limbs jerking upright with exaggerated creaks and sproing noises. His bones popped, his back cracked like a bag of microwave popcorn, and his legs did a weird funky dance before stabilizing. He dusted himself off, threw finger guns to nobody in particular, and said with a smirk, "Ahhh. Feels good to be not-dead."

Then… he paused. His brow furrowed. His red eyes blinked. "…Why am I looking at my own butt?" He slowly turned his head around—and realized it was on backwards. He was staring behind him while his body faced forward.

So now, instead of looking heroic, he looked like a cursed action figure someone assembled wrong. Overbrawl tilted his head. "…Uhhh, is that

supposed to happen?" Incarceration groaned. "Hold on—let me just…" He reached up, twisted his head 270 degrees, and it made a wind-up toy cranking noise followed by a loud POP!

"Much better," he said with a stretch, now facing the right direction. "Alright! Now… what did I miss?" "HEY!" Krane shouted, jabbing a finger toward Incarceration like he was ready to throw hands with just his index. Incarceration let out a heavy sigh, not even turning fully around. "Now what is it this time, Purple Head?"

Krane's face flushed with fury. "THAT'S MY WATCH! RIGHT THERE—ON YOUR ARM!" Everyone's attention shifted to the busted, glitching mechanical watch strapped loosely around Incarceration's wrist. The thing sparked like it had survived a microwave explosion. Incarceration raised a brow. His radiant crimson eyes slowly drifted to his wrist.

"This?" he said, smirking. "This is just… junk." Without hesitation, he slipped it off and tossed it to the ground like it was some cheap knockoff. Clink. Crunch. The already-damaged watch cracked further under the impact. Then he turned to the crew, who had grouped up like nervous middle schoolers waiting for a fight to break out. "Ahhh, what's this?" he purred. "I thought you all would be dead by now. Guess the rumors are true—kids really do outlive the adults these days." "You're a full-grown man who should be retired by now!" William shouted, flaring his pterodactyl wings. "You're like… ancient!" Incarceration gave the most deadpan blink in history. "Ugh. I know, right? It's not fun being ancient. The back pain alone…" But then—something shifted. A vibration in the air. A presence. He felt it before he saw it—something rocketing toward him at insane speed. Everyone's heads snapped to the horizon. And there—cutting through the sky like a missile made of rage—came Dreadixz. Screaming. Teeth clenched.

Eyes locked. Fists forward. A meteor of vengeance and fury. Duke, watching from the shattered building above, leapt from the edge and crashed down with a thunderous BOOM, landing beside Krane and Overbrawl.

The ground trembled under his boots. Together, they watched. Dreadixz

drew closer. Closer. Closer. Incarceration didn't even blink. Didn't flinch.

Didn't budge. Dreadixz was a blur now, screaming like an air raid siren, arm drawn back for a massive punch— And then— BANG! In one smooth motion, Incarceration raised his arm and blocked the strike with a bone-shattering impact.

A shockwave exploded outward like a hurricane blast, tearing across the battlefield. Dirt and air screamed away in every direction. The earth quaked. The Celestianites ducked as wind slammed past them. And Incarceration? Still standing. From behind his raised arm, he peeked over at Dreadixz's face—so close, their foreheads almost touched.

"How dare you come back to me… after I tossed you in the GARBAGE." Then, with a snarl, he grabbed Dreadixz's arm and twisted.

"ARRGHHHHHHHHHH!" Dreadixz roared, crashing to the ground with a sickening THUD. "YOU BETRAYED ME!" he screamed through the pain, voice cracked with rage. "YOU LEFT ME—" "OH, WILL YOU JUST SHUT UP?!" Incarceration snapped, slamming his foot into Dreadixz's chest with a gut-wrenching THUD that echoed across the battlefield. "THAT'S ENOUGH!" The voice boomed like a thunderclap. Sharp. Commanding. Unshakable. Everyone froze. The entire field went dead silent as all eyes turned to Javier—fists clenched, eyes blazing, his voice still lingering in the air like a blade freshly unsheathed. Emely gasped.

Sophia straight-up fainted. Ella covered her mouth like someone had just dropped the worst swear imaginable. Even the monsters blinked.

Javier—the quiet one. The sweetheart. The cinnamon roll. The dude who apologized when people bumped into him. He had just yelled. Loud. Krane, Overbrawl, Duke, Dreadixz… even Incarceration turned to look at him with stunned expressions. Incarceration narrowed his crimson eyes, dark energy starting to pulse behind them.

His voice dropped low and venomous. "…What did you just say?"

"I SAID—ENOUGH!" Javier's voice roared again, louder than before, shaking the tension in the air like lightning in a bottle. "I DON'T CARE WHO STARTED WHAT! I DON'T CARE WHO'S ANGRY OR WHO

GOT BETRAYED! THE WORLD IS FALLING APART, AND I'M DONE LISTENING TO YOU GUYS WHINE AND FIGHT!" He reached behind his hoodie and drew a sleek, gleaming white katana, the blade forged from pure Celestian steel.

He flicked a hidden black switch on the hilt—click—and the weapon hummed with power. "You've got two options," Javier growled. "Deactivate the Celestial Pillars… or I'll make you. By. Any. Means. Necessary." Silence. Incarceration blinked. Everyone gasped. Even the villains looked like they'd seen a ghost. Overbrawl fainted. Again.

"WHAT IS WITH THE FAINTING?!!" Krane shouted, catching him like it was déjà vu. "BRO, GET SOME IRON OR SOMETHING!" Prince stood up, electricity crackling in his hair. "Javier's right! You better listen—he'll kick your creepy ancient butt to next year!" Archie's fists ignited with blazing orange fire. He grinned. "Your move, Insane X. What's it gonna be?" Incarceration's expression hardened. He slowly turned to Javier, locking eyes with the boy who had just stood up to him. Red energy began to crack like glass across Incarceration's face, spiderwebbing from his eyes. A sinister crimson light pulsed from his fists. He stepped forward, the ground beneath his foot sizzling with dark energy. "…You," he growled, voice heavy with rage, "have chosen death… my son."

In a burst of light blue energy, Javier materialized in front of Incarceration like a streak of midnight lightning. His katana sliced across Incarceration's cheek, and darkness swallowed everything. Incarceration's eyes snapped open—but instead of the battlefield, he found himself inside a vast, swirling domain of deep, ominous blue.

Shadows flickered in his vision—phantoms of Javier flashing in and out—while he prowled the space, his eyes glowing a fierce, electric blue. Without warning, Javier streaked past Incarceration, slashing him with his crackling sword. The force sent Incarceration flying through the air.

He flipped backward, gathering his energy, fists crackling with power, then charged down at Javier. But Javier slid to the side in slow motion, fluid and untouchable. In one swift motion, Javier grabbed Incarceration's leg mid-charge, slammed him hard into the ground, and the impact unleashed

a shockwave that rippled across the battlefield. Incarceration tumbled, dirt and debris flying like a wild storm. He flipped and slid across the earth, barely regaining footing before Javier was already speeding towards him—earth layers levitating behind him like a chasing shadow.

The katana gleamed, and with a blur, Javier slashed past Incarceration, who scrambled to catch his bearings. Javier's blade danced—each strike a sharp flash of blue electricity. Confused and desperate, Incarceration's eyes darted as Javier closed in, finally cutting a fierce strike across his face. Incarceration skidded across the ground, fists clenched tight, dark nightmare energy swirling like a storm within him. But before he could retaliate, Javier vanished—only to reappear behind him, katana flashing in a furious barrage. The strikes came at impossible speed, relentless, unstoppable. Incarceration dodged furiously, but it was no use. He managed to block one slash—sending a shockwave tearing through the land. The katana embedded itself in his arm, and Javier's eyes flared a brilliant blue.

Then, from nowhere, 100 clones of Javier erupted behind him—electrical katanas drawn, all charging at Incarceration with deadly precision. Incarceration narrowed his eyes, slicing through the clones in a whirlwind of crimson fury. He blasted himself into the air, spinning and slashing, cutting down clone after clone—but Javier was relentless. With a brutal strike from behind, Javier slammed Incarceration back to the ground.

He rolled and tumbled, struggling for control, but Javier was already manipulating the very air itself—compressing it, crushing Incarceration down like a weight too heavy to bear. Pinned beneath the invisible pressure, Incarceration looked like he was drowning in solid force. Then, with a snap of Javier's fingers, a blue streak of light slashed across Incarceration's eyes, carving an X-shaped scar, glowing with icy cold menace.

Javier plunged his katana deep into the earth. The ground cracked—once, twice—shaking violently beneath them. Ten massive layers of earth lifted behind Javier, levitating like an unstoppable tidal wave of rock. With a commanding throw, Javier sent his sword flying at Incarceration, ordering the earth layers to follow. Incarceration burst up from the ground, fists

hammering the earth layers away in crimson explosions.

Rocks flew like missiles. But as he struck the last one, he failed to notice Javier's sword slicing through the air—cleanly severing his limbs, sending his body parts spinning in a grotesque ballet. Before Incarceration could react, Javier surged forward, katana blazing with blue energy, grabbing the weapon mid-flight. Gravity bent at Javier's command as he hurled Incarceration crashing through a massive rock—glitching, warping, and transforming into a monstrous arm. Javier skidded to a halt, katana stabbed into the ground, eyes blazing electric blue.

"TAAAAKKKEEEE THIS!!!!" His roar thundered louder than a storm. He charged like a streak of pure energy, no longer Javier but a living blue comet blazing towards his enemy, ready to impale. Suddenly, Incarceration's eyes flared crimson. "RAH!" he screamed, fists engulfed in crimson nightmare flames. His blow smashed into Javier with apocalyptic force, igniting a massive red explosion that shattered the ground, ripping through the domain Javier had created.

The shockwave obliterated everything in its path—Celestian warriors, fake Lunarites, monstrous beasts—turning the battlefield into a hellscape. The sky bled red as the land trembled violently, cracking and rupturing beneath the raw power unleashed. Everyone gripped whatever they could to avoid being torn apart. Krane, Overbrawl, and Duke raised their arms, shielding their heads from the relentless winds and shockwaves tearing the world apart. Buildings crumbled, the sky glitched, and the ground split asunder.

Dreadixz was blasted through the chaotic storm, barely managing to steady himself as he floated, trying to survive the fury. Javier? He was sent hurtling through the clouds, unconscious, crashing down like a meteor, tumbling violently across the ground.

"JAVI!" Keyler's shout echoed through the chaos as he fired his eyes onto Javier's direction. Without hesitation, he sprinted toward him while everyone else scattered, dodging the chaos and raging storm. Amid the howling wind and burning crimson nightmare flames, standing tall and unshaken, was Incarceration — the one and only insane X Incarceration

known to man. Incarceration clenched his fists once again, and the entire sky trembled with his power. The clouds flashed red and gold before the heavens twisted into a deep, blood-red inferno. Through the swirling smoke and dust, Starla stood firm, eyes locked on Incarceration. She pushed herself up, her gaze a mix of worry and steely determination.

"Look, you have to activate those pillars. If you don't, we're all done for. You understand this is for the world, right?" Incarceration's lips curled into a dark frown. "Oh, I understand alright. This is for the world… completely," he muttered, his voice low and cold. His eyes blazed as he sensed Guerven charging straight at him, fists dripping with molten magma. Without hesitation, Incarceration sidestepped and raised his arm to block the incoming strike. The magma exploded outward in a thunderous BOOM.

Grabbing Guerven's arm like a ragdoll, he threw him aside with brutal ease. Jaylen was about to launch a punch when Incarceration snapped his fingers sharply — a clear warning. Jaylen froze mid-step. "You know," Incarceration said, voice dripping with sinister amusement, "when I say I love kids, I mean it…" Daysni, from across the devastation, rolled her eyes and shouted, "Yeah! You've told us that way too many times!!!"

"It's because you don't understand," Incarceration growled darkly. "When I say I love kids, I mean I love their fear. They're so easy to scare, even the bravest ones. I've terrified newborns, toddlers, kids, pre-teens, teens, young adults — all of them! Don? The easiest of them all. His fear of embarrassment, his social anxiety? Perfect tools for me. That's why I love kids — they're so damn fun to mess with." Red nightmare energy crackled wildly around him as he turned his gaze upward, toward the Celestial Pillars where the Power Gems hovered. Duke's eyes widened in horror, understanding instantly what was about to happen.

"Don't do—" Duke yelled. But before he could finish, Incarceration's thunderous snap echoed through the sky, shaking everything to its core. Jaylen screamed, "Stop him now!" but it was already too late. The Power Gems floated above Incarceration's head, glowing fiercely as they orbited him. His red eyes swept over the scattered group, and a cruel chuckle escaped him. "Oh, what's the matter? Just a little villain having fun, right,

Dreadixz?"

Dreadixz, standing beside him, smirked knowingly. Though betrayed, they shared one purpose: Don had to be erased. Permanently. No matter the cost. Jocabed unsheathed her snowflake shurikens, but slowly, she let them fall — she knew they were useless. "Are they doing what I think they're doing?" she whispered. The Power Gems circled the two villains as they began to levitate. Incarceration crossed his arms, rising steadily into the crimson sky, while Dreadixz grinned like he'd just hit the jackpot, surveying the terrified teens below. The nightmare energy intensified, crackling like wild lightning around Incarceration. His smirk deepened as he ascended higher and higher. "Kids, this is what real power looks like," he sneered.

"I'll have a new name soon — sorry if 'Incarceration' sounds boring." The energy reached a fever pitch, shaking the ground beneath them all. Then, in a blinding flash, Incarceration roared at the top of his lungs: "RAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!" Five shockwaves erupted from Insane X's body, each one blazing a deep, blood-crimson red.

A massive scarlet streak burst from him, shooting straight up into the sky like a fiery spear. Simultaneously, Dreadixz unleashed his own cosmic fury—a colossal galaxy-colored streak tearing through the heavens, screaming and crackling with wild energy. Ten shockwaves in total shook the air and ground, throwing everyone off balance. Teeth clenched, hands digging into the earth, they watched those blazing streaks pierce the darkening sky. With a synchronized swipe of their arms, Insane X and Dreadixz revealed their true forms. Suddenly, the sky blackened. Insane X floated ominously in his full, terrifying glory. Four powerful arms stretched out, and twelve glowing red eyes pierced the gloom.

A massive X-shaped scar marked his forehead, burning with fierce intensity. The same blazing red X adorned his jet-black chest, pulsing with dark energy. Huge ripped dragon wings, blood-red and ragged, unfurled behind him. Eight muscular black spider legs emerged from his back, flexing with raw power. His teeth were sharp and menacing, claws razor-sharp—deadly weapons forged from the depths of nightmare itself.

The darkness in the sky wasn't just from Insane X's terror—it was because Dreadixz loomed nearby, a colossal galactic dragon the size of a small galaxy. His skin was pure black, shimmering with countless twinkling lunar stars. His eyes burned bright nova blue, glowing with cosmic power. Blue and violet energies swirled violently around him, a spiraling galaxy swirling beneath his massive form. His glowing nova-colored horns and razor-sharp black claws looked like they were forged by the stars themselves.

The galactic dragon's piercing gaze locked onto the team, while Insane X hovered high beside him, exuding dread and raw power. Olsen clenched his teeth, Prince tilted his head in curiosity, Archie's arms burst into flames as sweat dripped down his face, and Demaurion glared with pure hatred. "FINALLY!" Insane X's voice thundered like a storm crashing through mountains. "I CALL THIS FORM—INSANE X: LORD OF NIGHTMARES!" A jagged, glowing red spear glitch-formed in his massive hand. Gripping it tight, he pointed it down at the group below, a wicked grin spreading across his many-eyed face. "YOU REALLY THOUGHT YOU COULD BE HEROES OF AVANGARD AGAINST THIS? THINK AGAIN!"

His gaze snapped to outer space, eyes sharpening as his grin widened. Two streaks of light—one violet, one pure white—clashed fiercely in the darkness near the moon. Turning back to the stunned crowd below, his twelve eyes absorbing every detail, he snarled: "I guess it's time to go kick some cosmic ass…" With a burst of energy, he shot upward, tearing through the atmosphere in a blazing red streak. Behind him, Dreadixz floated in space, struggling to catch up to Don and Dark Don's fierce battle. Starla's voice cut through the chaos one last time, dripping with fury and fierce hope. "HE'LL KICK BOTH YOUR ASSES, YOU DUMB DIRTY BITCHES! HE WILL! AND I MEAN IT!" They were gone. Starla collapsed to her knees, eyes fixed on the fading sky. Jaylen stood beside her, silently watching. Then he turned to Duke, who stood with Krane and Overbrawl. "They'll be alright? Will they?" Duke's face was uncertain, but his voice was steady.

"Yes… they will."

CH.47 From Enemies to Allies

"**RAHHHHHHHHHH!**"

Dark Don's roar shattered the silence of the void as he drove both his fists straight into my elbows.

The force of the blow sent a shockwave pulsing through my entire body—like an explosion from the inside out. The impact almost launched me clean off the moon's surface, but I held my ground, teeth clenched, muscles locked. I refused to move. I forced the tremor to stop at my feet.

Then—

In a blink.

Dark Don was gone.

No—in front of me.

Before I could react, he teleported right into my face. A blinding flash-kick cracked against my jaw, flipping me backwards into the air.

He ignited his rocket shoes—fiery bursts of lunar propulsion erupting beneath him—and launched himself straight up. Then came crashing down with the weight of a meteor, smashing me into the surface of the moon with brutal precision. He landed full-force on my body, the pressure unbearable, my energy surging wild and unstable beneath him.

His rocket boots stayed lit, pinning me even deeper into the dust-covered ground.

He leaned in close, face inches from mine, raising an eyebrow.

Then he *scoffed.*

One boot pressed into my chest, pinning me down like a trophy. The other remained planted, as if grounding his authority.

He stared down with this cold finality in his eyes and muttered:

"Don… you're a useless hero."

He pushed harder. I could feel my ribs strain, my celestial energy flaring out in Ultra Form—unstable, desperate.

"It's no use," Dark Don growled, his voice trembling with rage. "Once I'm done with you… I'll make sure everyone else is gone too. All of them—gone."

"YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS, DARK DON!" I roared back, my body crackling with defiance. "THERE'S STILL ANOTHER WAY!"

I threw myself upward with all my remaining strength.

But he was quicker.

With a sweep of his leg, he flipped me into the air like I was nothing but a leaf in the wind.

"Yeah?" he mocked—and then delivered a crushing aerial kick to my chest mid-flight.

My body *flew.*

Crashing through rocky moon spires, tumbling through empty space, before slamming down across the craters.

I skidded across the surface like a broken comet, digging a trench with my side as the dust of the moon erupted behind me in a long trail of pain.

I didn't move. Couldn't.

Then I saw him.

Dark Don—walking toward me.

Each step slow. Controlled. Lunar energy flickering like a wildfire around his body, casting twisted shadows in the dark.

He grabbed me by the neck and lifted me with one arm, high above the ground like I was weightless. I squirmed, choked, fought to breathe. But it was no use. His grip was iron. My power was fading.

I stopped fighting.

I hung there, limp in the moonlight.

I was done.

Ultra Form wouldn't last much longer. Seconds, maybe. And then… that'd be it.

But then…

Something changed.

The white light around Dark Don's body—it flickered. Once.

Then again.

The flames of his energy, once blazing bright, now crackled like dying embers.

He looked down at himself.

His eyes widened.

Panic hit him like a wave.

"No… No! NO!"

He *slammed* me into the ground, hard—so hard the moon itself seemed to quake. A shockwave burst out in every direction, flattening everything around us. A crater formed beneath our feet, wide and raw.

And then—

Flash.

His energy was gone.

He dropped to his knees.

He was… normal. Just Dark Don again. No powers. No fire.

Me too. My Ultra Form broke apart in a shimmer of fading light.

I collapsed onto my back, breathing hard, eyes heavy.

Dark Don didn't move.

He stared at his hands like he didn't recognize them—like they'd betrayed him.

They trembled.

His head bowed low, face hidden beneath a curtain of exhaustion and guilt. Then, in a sudden jolt of frustration, he slammed himself against a moon spire, and sat there—silent. Wrecked.

I watched him.

His tail barely moved. His eyes, once sharp and furious, now dull. Empty.

I got up. Slowly. Carefully.

I limped toward him, unsure of what to say—but feeling something stir in my chest.

I sat beside him. No words. Just silence. Two broken souls in the vast

emptiness of space.

All the stars in the galaxy couldn't light up what I was feeling.

After a long pause, I finally whispered, "Are you sure this is the right way? Is this… *really* your redemption?"

He didn't answer right away.

His head tilted upward, eyes drifting through the cosmos. Then back down.

"…Why ask?" he muttered. "There's… no redemption. Not for me."

I turned to him, "Then what's with the change? You held back. You stopped."

He hesitated, then said quietly, "I—I remembered Silicia's words. And now… I feel like a wreck."

He crossed his arms again, eyes fixed on the moon's silver surface.

I picked up a small stone, tossed it lazily into the distance. The silence swallowed it.

"Revenge isn't always the answer," I said softly.

Dark Don looked up, pain swimming in his gaze.

"Don… I've *hurt* everyone. Everyone. I've crossed too many lines. Burned too many bridges. There's nothing left."

"I know," I replied gently. "I know. But you didn't start this way. You just… fell into the wrong path. It happens."

I sighed and looked at him again.

"What do you think Silicia would want?"

He froze.

His expression softened. A shimmer returned to his eyes—one last flicker of who he used to be.

"…She wouldn't want this," he said, voice cracking. "She wouldn't want any of this. I wanted to wipe out an entire tribe—for *her.* But… if she was alive, if she saw me now…"

He shook his head.

"There's no redemption. I've failed. What can I even do?"

I stood up, fire reigniting in my chest. "Dark Don. You *can* redeem yourself. There's still time to make it right. We can save the world—

together. I'll help you. I'll guide you back."

I held out my hand.

"Just… trust me."

He looked at it.

Then looked at me.

Then back down at Earth.

A faint, dark chuckle escaped his lips.

Then he looked back at me, and for the first time… he smiled. A real one. Broken, but real.

"You're the best rival I could've asked for," he said, voice barely above a whisper. "…The best."

"…I still hate you though."

I groaned, "*OH COME ON—*"

"But," he added with a smirk, "I like you… as a rival."

I blinked, then chuckled too.

We shook hands under the stars, the dust of battle still clinging to our bodies.

"Yeah… I like you as a rival too."

Then—something caught my eye.

I turned my head toward Earth, and that's when I saw it. A red streak—no, a *blazing crimson missile*—was rocketing straight toward us at max speed. It wasn't just red; it was *blinding*. Like a comet dipped in blood and set on fire. Like something that escaped from the pits of hell.

"What is that?" Dark Don muttered, squinting at the oncoming blaze. The streak moved faster—*way* faster—like a meteor about to crash into the moon at lightspeed.

I took a step back, heart pounding. It was getting closer. Closer. Too close.

"AGH!" I shouted as a blinding red light exploded in front of us, flashbanging me and Dark Don. I dropped to my knees without meaning to—my body moved on its own, like something *forced* me to kneel. Dark Don was doing the same. My muscles screamed to move, to fight back, but it was useless. I was locked in place.

Then I looked up through the blinding haze.

The red streak swooped down, descending like a nightmare comet, and SLAMMED into the moon's surface with a colossal shockwave. The entire moon *quaked*. Dust clouds erupted. The impact was so violent it messed up Dark Don's hair—dude looked like he just walked out of a wind tunnel.

I gritted my teeth, gripping my horns to avoid being dragged by the pressure. But the force was *insane*. Still, I held my ground. The dust began to settle.

And standing in the center of the crater… was Incarceration.

Eight massive, black spider-like legs burst from his back—hairless, sharp, and gleaming like blades. His body pulsed with raw red energy. Twelve glowing red eyes blinked at once, burning with a nightmarish light. Tattered, blood-red dragon wings flared out behind him, and his mouth stretched into a wicked grin, rows of dagger-like teeth gleaming.

He flicked his tongue like a lizard. Then he clenched his clawed fist.

"Well, well, well… *what a SIGHT to see you kids!*" he cackled.

Red energy flared across his body, licking his skin like living fire. The ground beneath him cracked. His twelve eyes blazed as the flames pulsed, surrounding him in a vortex of rage.

"INCARCERATION! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!" I shouted, my voice cracking through the roar of his aura.

He tilted his head, grinning wider. "Oh, I'm sorry… I'm just in my *Ultra Form*, ready to kill the both of you *with no problem.*"

Before we could even react, he vanished.

BOOM.

In an instant, he appeared in front of Dark Don and punched him so hard in the chest that it sent him flying through the moon like a missile. A red explosion erupted on the other side, lighting up the moon like a burning orb. Shockwaves rippled across the surface, tearing craters into existence.

Then—Incarceration turned to me.

"Your turn."

He teleported right in front of me, uppercutting me straight into the

air. Before I could recover, he grabbed my leg, spun midair, and *yeeted* me across the lunar landscape. I crashed through mountain ranges, spires, and half-destroyed silver towers. My body skidded across the moon's surface, kicking up a storm of dust.

My mask whipped behind me in the wind. I slammed my fists into the ground and gritted my teeth as Dark Don suddenly teleported beside me, his body crackling with lunar energy. He stood firm, eyes locked on Incarceration, analyzing every move.

"He's in Ultra Form," Dark Don said. "He tapped into the Power Gems somehow… judging by his output, he might be *galaxy-level* strong. Maybe more."

I stood up beside him, smirking despite the pain. "Then, Dark Don… let's show them how it's done."

But Incarceration just laughed again.

"Oh, I'm not alone, kids…"

Suddenly, Dreadixz descended from above, wings like solar flares and scales shimmering like galaxies. He looked *colossal*, like a galactic beast made flesh. Whatever the Power Gems did to him… it turned him into something straight out of cosmic legend.

Dark Don narrowed his eyes and scoffed, "Then I'll take all of you on at once!"

I cracked my knuckles. "You heard the guy!"

Light surged around me as I snapped into my Ultra Form, energy radiating like a star collapsing into a singularity. My eyes glowed with blazing *KX* symbols, marking the transformation. Light poured from every inch of me.

Dark Don shifted too, bursting into Ultra Form—his body now glowing like a lunar demigod. His eyes shined with twin *XK* marks, his aura cold but powerful.

Incarceration smirked and glanced up at Dreadixz.

"Heh… let's show these kids how it's done." Incarceration didn't waste a second.

He launched at me like a crimson meteor, grabbing my neck and

rocketing into the sky at lightspeed. My body jolted from the sudden pressure, but I held on. And just like that, we were soaring through space, clashing again and again—colliding with enough force to rattle the stars themselves.

Every blow was cataclysmic. Every dodge a blur.

Planets spun in the distance, their orbits trembling as our battle roared past them. Incarceration threw a sharp aerial kick— I blocked it with my forearm, countered with a full-force punch of my own, and created a shockwave so massive it rippled red across the void.

But I got blown back, hard—crashing onto the moon, tumbling across its surface like a skipping stone through cosmic dust.

Then came the Nightmare Blasts.

Red spheres of dark energy rained from the sky. I flipped to my feet, dashing backwards across the lunar surface—dodging every blast with flips, jumps, and perfectly timed sidesteps. Sparks flew past my face. One wrong move and I'd be atomized.

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Dark Don and Dreadixz tearing across the stars—pure chaos in motion. Just a blur of lunar blue and violet streaks.

But I didn't have time to process.

Incarceration appeared right in front of me.

I ducked his first punch. Teleported behind him—tornado kicked—

He vanished.

My eyes widened.

BOOM!

He reappeared beneath me and punched me straight into the heavens. I spiraled upward, crashing through stars like they were made of glass. Before I could recover, he materialized again—this time floating with five massive red energy orbs around him. He snapped his fingers, sending them hurtling at me like guided missiles, chains of dark matter trailing behind.

I didn't flinch.

I grabbed the chains midair, twisted my body, and hurled Incarceration

toward the crater of the moon. He slammed into it, carving out a crater so deep it shook the entire surface. I boosted downward, charging up a finishing blow—

But he blitzed upward, crashing into me mid-strike.

We collided midair. Then—

Teleport.

Backhand.

My body turned into a streak of violet flying through space, crashing violently onto Venus, smashing through the atmosphere like a meteor. Dust and lightning danced around me. But before I could breathe—

Time froze.

Everything stopped.

Incarceration stood above me, calmly snapping his fingers.

Reality bent.

He unleashed a million-punch combo, hammering me midair as time crawled. He zipped around my body, then screamed and Tornado Kicked me straight through the clouds of Venus.

I folded midair. Hard.

I smashed through a massive structure, dust and rubble flying everywhere.

But I wasn't done.

I backflipped midair and blasted toward him, screaming at the top of my lungs. My punches collided with his, fists clashing like stars colliding. I kneed him in the gut, grabbed his head, and dragged him across the atmosphere, both of us tearing through the skies like streaking comets.

He skidded across the ground at light speed—then reversed direction, running backward.

I fired celestial blasts as fast as my body could handle. He teleported between them like a nightmare in motion, each explosion lighting up the orange sky.

He flashed in front of me—

Flash kick.

I flew upward—he met me again, now a sphere of nightmare energy,

and SLAMMED down onto my body, detonating on contact.

Venus cracked.

Mountains split. Lava erupted.

He tried to follow up with his spider-leg strike, but I kicked him into the sky, launching after him, holding tight.

His tentacles fired like machine guns. I twirled midair, dodging them, slamming him into mountains one by one.

And then—I snapped.

My body lit up, glowing violet.

I became a celestial vortex, whirling through the atmosphere. Every twist cracked the planet's surface, celestial energy cutting through the air like divine blades.

I caught Incarceration mid-skid, spun around, and brought my foot down on his head with thunderous force.

BOOM.

He flew across Venus, carving a trench through the land like a meteor trail. I teleported in front of him, grabbed his neck, and dragged him across the surface, breaking sound and light.

I threw him into the sky, teleported above, and screamed—

"ULTRA FIVE HUNDRED CRACKS!"

I struck his chest. Darkness fell.

Then—

I disappeared.

So did he.

Only the sound of reality shattering remained.

Each hit echoed through the void—fracturing air, warping space—and the final punch erupted with a violet beam that swallowed Incarceration whole.

He screamed.

He roared—

"RAHHHHH!"

A red explosion burst forth, canceling out the beam and shaking the cosmos.

I hovered in the air, exhausted. But then—

Eyes opened in the sky.

Dozens. Hundreds. Crimson, nightmare eyes—watching me.

Incarceration floated above, arms crossed.

He raised a finger, drew a single kanji in the air: — *Fight.*

The eyes glowed blood red, then fired five blinding beams toward me. Venus went pitch black. The beams hit.

BOOM.

A red-white explosion consumed the planet.

I was in the core of it.

Flying.

Broken.

Before I could recover—

Incarceration teleported in front of me, slammed me down, then kicked me skyward and unleashed a barrage of aerial strikes.

Faster than lightning.

Each kick flashed like thunder.

Then time slowed again.

"INSTANT REALITY LOSS!"

His leg barely touched my chest—

And I exploded into a red dimension filled with watching eyes.

They followed me.

Moving. Whispering.

Incarceration flickered around me from every angle.

He appeared, whispered:

"."

Death.

He tapped my chest with a spider-leg.

And my body detonated.

Every bone cracked. Every limb screamed.

The blast blinded everything.

I was sent flying—back to space.

Back to the moon.

And then—

WHAM.

Incarceration's final punch—red-hot, nightmare-fueled—slammed into my face and drove me into the ground, carving out a crater that shook the Earth itself.

I lay there, broken.

Beaten.

Tired.

But not done.

CH.48 The Final Battle of The End

"JAVIER! JAVIER, CAN YOU HEAR ME?!" Keyler's voice cracked as he dropped to his knees beside his fallen friend. Javier didn't respond. His eyes were shut tight, face pale, and his body limp. But he wasn't gone—Keyler felt the slow thump of his heartbeat against his back as he lifted him up. It was weak, but it was there. There was still hope. The skies above were still drenched in that haunting scarlet red. The battlefield below had gone quiet—Celestianites gathering in hushed clusters, watching as the last of the fake Lunaranites retreated. Everyone's eyes were drawn upward, past the blood-colored clouds, to the real storm unfolding beyond the atmosphere.

Don and Dark Don—two sides of the same soul—were locked in a relentless tag-team brawl with Incarceration, their strikes lighting up space like fireworks. Beside them loomed Dreadixz, now fully transformed into some kind of Galactical Dragon, his form so massive it made the stars look like dust. He launched enormous lunar beams into the void. Dark Don fired back with ruthless blasts. Don spun through the chaos with pinpoint kicks and pure speed, clashing with Incarceration over and over again—each impact echoing like thunder. Don wasn't just fighting for survival. He was fighting for his friends. For Avangard. For everyone below who looked to him as their last hope.

The soldiers on the ground slowly lowered their spears, eyes locked on the sky. Silence spread like a wave. Even Starla, usually calm and composed, looked up with worry all over her face. Finally, Keyler staggered toward the rest of the crew, Javier still on his back. His legs trembled with

exhaustion. "Lonnie! Heal him—now! He needs help fast!" "I'm on it!" Lonnie Mae replied, her voice sharp with urgency. Four vines instantly burst from her back, snaking toward the ground as she crouched. Keyler gently laid Javier down. Off in the distance, Power sat with his arms crossed, watching everything unfold in space like it was some divine event. Lonnie leaned over Javier and did a quick check. Her vine gently tapped his chest—yes, there was still a heartbeat. But she checked again for a pulse… nothing. She cursed under her breath, then stood up and closed her eyes. Two more vines erupted from her back, now six in total.

They wrapped around Javier like protective serpents, lifting him slightly off the ground. "This is going to take a while," she said through gritted teeth. "I'm gonna need every vine I've got." Power watched from afar, still silent. The war in space only grew louder, brighter—blinding flashes cut across the sky, massive shockwaves tore through the atmosphere, and the sound of teleportation blasts echoed like roaring cannons. Every eye in Avangard was locked on the sky. In Iris Town, the largest screen mounted atop the clocktower flickered to life, the news blaring into the night. A breathless reporter stood in front of a crowded street, villagers, children—even pets—huddled behind him, watching the sky. "This is Breaking Avangardian News!" the reporter shouted into his mic. "We're witnessing a live cosmic battle above our world—Don and Dark Don versus an evil Zenith and a galactic dragon. Is this the end? We don't know—but we're watching history in the making!" In Eclitsic, another broadcast cut in: "Frozen News confirms: Don the Celestianite and his rival-turned-ally Dark Don have joined forces against Incarceration and a colossal dragon beast. This… this could be the final stand." News anchors across the globe chimed in: "Is this the end of Avangard?" "Is the world… cooked?" "We need to pray for Don the Celestianite—he's giving it everything!" "Lock your doors, stay indoors! This isn't a drill!" "A prophecy kid versus a cosmic monster and a Zenith? This might be the craziest event in our history!" Through all the noise, the fear, the disbelief, Power stayed quiet. Thinking. Processing. He didn't know how this would all play out. But there was one thing he did know deep in his soul: Don and Dark Don were going to win this fight.

Meanwhile, in the chaos of space… "AGHH!" I screamed as Incarceration's fist plowed straight into my chest, sending me rocketing backwards like a meteor that had just been punched out of orbit. My body tore through floating boulders and massive meteors, each one exploding into cosmic dust as I crashed through them like they were made of glass. Before I could even catch my breath, he was there again—Incarceration—blitzing through space like a demon with a jet engine, slamming me down with a brutal punch that crushed me into the surface of the moon. BOOM. The shockwave cracked the moon like an egg, a massive crater forming beneath me as dust and chunks of lunar rock erupted into space.

I lay there for a split second, groaning, barely conscious—until I looked up… and saw him. Floating above with that same smug smirk carved across his face. "Heh… nice try." Then snap—he teleported. Right in front of me. Before I could even react, he swept my legs, spun low to the ground, and— BAM! A nightmare-fueled crimson uppercut launched me so hard I swear I left orbit. My body spiraled into the stars like a ragdoll, like some cheap action figure being abused by its owner. I didn't even get a second to breathe before— WHAM! A massive claw came out of nowhere—Dreadixz's—slamming into me with the weight of an entire galaxy. I felt every scale and edge of his cosmic dragon claws scrape across my body as I got sent flying again. But then—a blur. Dark Don. Light-speed blitz past me like a comet, straight at Incarceration. He got a clean shot—fist to the face. It gave me just enough time to stop flipping midair.

I shook my head, blood dripping from my lip, then slowly raised my eyes back toward Incarceration as he wiped a trail of red from his cheek. Oh, you wanna dance? Let's dance. I powered up. A storm of celestial energy ignited around me, crackling through my veins and wrapping my body in a shimmering glow. Then—blast off. I launched myself at him, a living meteor streaking across space, a burning star of vengeance. Incarceration met me mid-flight, both of us locked in on each other like missiles ready to collide. Faster. Closer. Energy charging in both fists—mine glowing with pure celestial light, his boiling with nightmare fire. Then— BOOM. We collided. The explosion lit up the entire cosmos—red and violet

shockwaves crashing through space, rattling the stars and bending gravity itself. We broke apart, only for him to spin and tornado-kick me sideways through a small asteroid cluster. I zipped right back, fists blazing, cracking him across the face and driving him downward. He blocked, grabbed my arm, twisted, and flung me like I was nothing. I flipped mid-air and regained my momentum. Boosted. Uppercut straight into the sky. I broke the atmosphere, hovered among the stars for a breath—and then I dived. Flipping faster and faster, celestial energy spiraling around me until I became a blazing celestial sphere, descending like a falling sun. I was seconds away from landing my Ultra Violet Violence attack— But then… SNAP.

Out of nowhere, chains. Four of them, blood-red and glowing, shot out of portals behind me and wrapped around my arms and legs—tight. I thrashed, twisted, pulled with everything I had, but they held me mid-air like some kind of cosmic puppet. The chains came from swirling, hellish red portals. They burned with crimson fury, and no matter how much I struggled, they wouldn't break. Then—Incarceration appeared again. Arms crossed. Floating. "I like my enemies chained," he whispered with a sinister grin. His four mechanical spider legs extended, snapping toward me with horrifying speed, latching onto every limb, locking me in place like I was strapped to a celestial torture rack. "Nightmare Drain." He snapped his fingers. Red lightning surged from the portals, zapping my body, tearing through every nerve, every cell, every corner of my soul. I screamed—roared—as the pain seared through me. My body convulsed. Celestial energy flickered. I felt my strength dripping away, second by second. "AHHHHHHHHHHHHH!" The sky itself responded. Eyes. Enormous, haunting eyes opened across the void, blinking through space. They began singing—some eldritch, unholy chant in a language no living thing should ever know. The voices—eerie, godlike, echoing—wrapped around me like curses, as the crimson flames licked across my skin. I screamed again. And again. I was being tortured. Broken. Then—CRACK! Dark Don. He blitzed in like lightning, shoulder-slamming Incarceration mid-gloat. The impact shattered the chains, shattered space itself, sending

Incarceration flying. The portals vanished. I dropped like a meteor, breathless, shaking.

I looked up, still burning, still gasping for life—as Dark Don and Incarceration clashed above. Fist met fist. Energy blasts exploded in every direction. Then—Dark Don axe-kicked him down with such power that the moon shook beneath us. He appeared behind him mid-fall, winding up his arm— SLAP. An absolutely disrespectful backhand across Incarceration's face sent a shockwave of lunar energy exploding outward. Incarceration roared and countered with a spinning punch—but Dark Don blocked it with one arm, ducked low, and uppercutted him back into the stars. Then—teleport. Dark Don appeared above him, grabbed his head, spun him like a basketball, and yeeted him across the cosmos like a meteor on fire. Incarceration crashed through meteors, cracked lunar mirrors—ones Dark Don conjured just to humiliate him. One by one, the impacts echoed like bombs. Then he hit the moon. CRASH. The ground trembled. Another massive crater formed. And then—Incarceration roared from within it. "ENOUGH!!!" Reality trembled. In that instant, everything froze. Dreadixz halted mid-flight, suspended like a glitch in the sky. I couldn't move. Neither could Dark Don. It was as if the universe itself had been paused—trapped inside a red-tinted hellscape. The stars dimmed. Earth floated nearby, ominously silent beneath this blood-red sky. And I hated it. Every instinct in me screamed. My skin crawled. This was Incarceration's world now—twisted, wrong, and full of fear. But then… BOOM. Dark Don exploded in a blinding burst of lunar light, shattering the frozen dimension. The red sky cracked like glass, the illusion breaking as pieces of the false world fell around us like shards of a broken mirror. Incarceration now floated beside Dreadixz, his posture loose, relaxed—but deadly. He cracked his neck once… then again. Rolled his shoulders. Twisted his wrists. His spider legs extended slowly behind him, twitching like predators ready to strike. His gaze locked onto us—cold, calculating, full of venom. I teleported beside Dark Don, now floating high above them. We both stared down at the two villains like we were kings on a throne, refusing to bow. Dark Don crossed his arms, stoic and sharp. I didn't say a word yet, but

the fire in my chest was boiling. Incarceration sighed. "It's pathetic… how you two keep fighting like any of this matters. As if hope hasn't already died." His twelve nightmare-filled eyes blinked out of sync, glitching like a corrupted video file. He turned to me. "Don… have you really forgotten who you are?" His voice grew sharper, more cruel. "You were nothing. A joke. Weak. They thought you were a clown—embarrassing, awkward, too dumb to even fight his own shadow. You were never meant to matter."

I scoffed, lips curling into a smirk. "So what?" I said. "That was before." I pointed at him, defiant. "They didn't know me back then—but they do now. And I know them. You're stuck in the past like it's a prison—but I broke free. They changed because they learned who I really am. And guess what?" I looked down at Earth. I saw them. My friends. From this high up, I could see everything. People cheering. Lights flashing. A plane flew by, dragging a banner through the sky: "Let's Go Don—The Celestianite King!" My eyes scanned Avangard. I saw the cities. The skies. The fans. The support. The love. And in that moment—I understood everything. I turned back to Incarceration, and this time my smile wasn't just confident—it was legendary. "If it weren't for Olsen… Prince… Demaurion… Archie… Ella… Power—and yeah, even Starla…" I exhaled, my breath glowing with energy. "I'd still be lost in my Scourge Don arc." Incarceration's glare sharpened. "You think you've won something? You've still got Dreadixz to face." He motioned toward the towering figure beside him. "I may not be the final fight, but if I want to stop that prophecy… I'll have to end you myself." I didn't flinch. Instead, I got into my fighting stance, fists clenched tight as surges of celestial energy coursed through me like lightning on overdrive. The air around me ignited. "You wanna know something, Incarceration?" I said, my voice calm but filled with fire. The energy in my body began burning brighter and hotter, wrapping around me like armor made of stars. "I'm not afraid of you. I'm not afraid of Dreadixz. Because this power isn't just mine—it's theirs. It's everything they gave me." My eyes snapped open, glowing bright with Celestial light. Then—I summoned them. Two twin daggers appeared in my hands, curved and gleaming, radiating with light violet Celestial energy. Sharp enough to slice stardust. I brought the

hilts together, and— BOOM. A flash of power surged through my arms as the daggers fused, transforming into a double-bladed celestial sword, glowing with radiant violet energy and pulsing like a heartbeat. Behind me, Dark Don summoned his own weapon—an enormous white lunar spear, edged on both sides, shimmering with celestial lightning. It looked like it could pierce time itself. I narrowed my eyes at Incarceration. I could feel the pressure in the air. The fate of Avangard was about to be decided. "You want to erase hope?" I said, lifting the sword. "Too bad." "Because legends…"

I took one step forward. "Never…" My blade ignited into a blinding flame. "Die." We both launched at Incarceration at light speed, crashing into him with a force so massive it erupted in a shockwave that shattered the air around us. He was sent flying—spiraling through the upper atmosphere like a meteor, his body ripping through clouds and space debris. But we didn't stop. Me and Dark Don boosted toward him again, zipping around him in rapid circles—slamming into his body from every angle, faster and faster. Every collision landed, every blow pushed him further, the sound of impact echoing across space like rolling thunder. I finally got close enough to slash him across the chest with my Celestial daggers, sending him flying out of the solar system. The stars around us blurred as we entered a nebula of swirling galaxies and glowing colors. I shot past him, slashing once more—this time with pure speed—while Dark Don blitzed forward and uppercutted Incarceration into the air, then axe-kicked him down with a glowing, lunar-charged leg of fury. Incarceration spiraled downward, crashing into a massive yellow planet, exploding on impact and leaving a crater so huge it looked like the planet got punched by a god. I descended like a shooting star, my entire body blazing with celestial fire, and landed right on top of him, causing another massive shockwave that rippled across the planet's surface like an earthquake. Suddenly, Incarceration teleported in front of me, fists already flying. He unleashed a wild flurry of punches, and I dodged on instinct—bobbing and weaving at lightspeed. I ducked, swept his legs out from under him, and kicked him straight into the sky like a ragdoll. As he flew upward,

Dark Don teleported above, slamming him back down to the surface with a massive strike from his lunar spear. Incarceration crashed through the ground again, rolling across rocky terrain and destroying everything in his path. I teleported behind him and fired a massive beam of Celestial energy, which he blinked through—only to create a shockwave that sent me flying into deep space. Then we clashed again. Over and over. We moved like comets, smashing into each other in the middle of the cosmos.

I spun in midair, slashing him with my sword, then launched him downward—straight into the core of a nearby star. He spiraled like a red comet, crashing through the sun's surface, screaming in rage as he burned. I didn't stop—I followed him in. Even though the heat scorched me, I powered through, fists flaring. Behind him, Dark Don closed in with both fists raised, ready to finish the job. We collided with Incarceration one more time— KA-BOOM! The shockwave that exploded from our clash vaporized the entire sun, turning it into cosmic dust. But then, Incarceration grabbed Dark Don by the arm, spun, and slammed him into me. Before we could react, he unleashed a massive red Nightmare Blast, sending both of us flying through space once again. Stars whipped past us. Incarceration kept firing red blasts like bullets, and we weaved through them—dodging, deflecting, striking back. I soared upward and spun, fists flaring, and dove toward Incarceration at top speed. We clashed fists again—and suddenly— FLASH! We were teleported into a psychedelic dimension—swirling colors, endless stars, and chaotic gravity. We fought through it, punching, kicking, dodging, slashing, our movements shaking the very space around us. I kicked at Incarceration midair—he dodged, then launched a spider leg that wrapped around me. He spun and threw me back into the stars, then teleported in front of me and blitzed my body from all angles, punching at lightspeed. Then he appeared behind me, twirled, and tornado-kicked me into the air. I tumbled uncontrollably—until Dark Don caught me, spun midair, and threw me right back at Incarceration like a cosmic missile. I became a crackling celestial sphere, energy spiraling off me in every direction. My fists charged with ultra energy as I collided with him again. He threw a million punches—I dodged every one in a

blur—then landed a gut punch so powerful it nearly shattered reality. Incarceration's arms flew wide as he got blasted back, breaking through the very barrier of space itself, trailing light like a burning meteor. But he wasn't done. He powered up midair, locking eyes with us, and launched himself forward, roaring in fury. Me and Dark Don launched too—ready for round two.

BOOOOM. We collided mid-vortex, the shockwave exploding outward, tearing through dimensions. Galaxies swirled around us like storm clouds as we fought through a collapsing multiverse, punching through nebulae, crashing through planets, burning through time itself. We moved like stars—speeding blurs, clashing endlessly. Incarceration struck—I ducked. Dark Don spun behind him, kicked him up from behind, but Incarceration twisted and struck back, all of us moving like three cosmic titans in a dance of destruction. Finally, we passed through a beam of light—emerging into a void of infinite galaxies. Then it happened. Incarceration grabbed Dark Don by the throat with one of his spider legs—and opened his mouth to fire a devastating red beam. I struck his arm to stop him—but he blocked it, releasing a shockwave that blasted me back across the void. He didn't hesitate. He fired the beam directly at Dark Don, the red light blinding, enormous, and reality-breaking. It consumed everything—galaxies, planets, stars—and hit Dark Don full-force. Dark Don was launched like a comet through entire star systems, the beam scorching everything in its path. He finally crashed into a large green planet, creating a crater that shook the entire planet to its core. The battlefield was shattered. But we weren't finished. "HOW DARE YOU!" I roared, voice crackling with the fury of a thousand suns. In an instant, I teleported directly in front of Incarceration, the space around me warping with the force of my arrival. He didn't even notice me—until it was too late. My body ignited with blazing celestial energy, radiant and untamed, flickering like a solar storm. The domain around me bent to my power. Lightning crackled across my limbs as I gripped Incarceration's arm tightly. He finally turned—but I had already launched him skyward like a ragdoll. I screamed with raw power, "ULTRA DISTINGUISH!!!" With one motion,

I hurled him through space. He tore through constellations, galaxies, asteroid fields, and meteors, smashing through cosmic debris like a living missile. Then, gathering energy in my palms, I conjured a massive, swirling celestial orb, converting it into a flexible, luminous beam of divine force. The beam roared forward, slamming into Incarceration mid-flight and dragging him down across the surface of the same planet where Dark Don had landed. The ground split apart, a colossal trench forming as the beam carved a scar into the planet's crust. I didn't stop. I kept pushing until my energy burned out completely—leaving my chest heaving. I let out a breath, my aura flickering low, and teleported beside Dark Don, who was crouched low with lunar energy burning in his glowing white eyes.

We stared into the dust cloud, tense. And then… A single red eye. Glowing. Watching. From the haze emerged one of Incarceration's spider-like limbs, stretching toward me like a viper ready to strike. Before I could react, Dark Don teleported in front of me and sliced through the leg—but Incarceration snarled and lifted him into the air using telekinesis, gripping his throat tightly as he strode out of the dust cloud laughing. Another leg snapped forward and wrapped around me, binding my body in a steel-like grip. Then, above us, the sky exploded with unblinking red eyes, watching our suffering like gods amused by chaos. My eyes flared wide with celestial power as I snarled and ripped through the bindings, bursting free. I charged forward, body spinning into a blinding tornado kick—but Incarceration ducked just in time, grabbed my leg mid-spin, and smashed me into the ground so hard that boulders shot into the air like cannonballs. Dark Don roared as he broke free from the telekinetic grip. He soared into the sky and rocketed down, lunar energy dancing along his limbs. His boots ignited, flaring blue and silver. Just as Incarceration still held onto me, I broke free and uppercutted him into the stratosphere—sending him straight to Dark Don. Mid-air, Dark Don caught him, flipped, and SLAMMED Incarceration's head into the ground, creating a shockwave so massive it split the surface in a massive quake. Incarceration vanished in a blink and reappeared behind Dark Don, backhanding him with a brutal strike that sent him tumbling across the land like a meteor. But Dark

Don skidded to a stop, flames under his boots flaring, and flash-kicked Incarceration into the air. Time slowed. With grace and fury, he surged forward and dropkicked him back to the ground, carving a second trench through the battlefield. I looked skyward—and my stomach dropped. King Dreadixz. Floating in like a planet-sized demon. Claws clenched. Galaxies trembling from his roar. I turned, scanning for anything—anything—that could stop this. That's when I saw it: a swirling, radiant galaxy floating in the far reaches of space. Something clicked. I knew what I had to do. I blasted off, flying faster than light through star systems. I reached the edge of the galaxy and hovered in awe. It was massive, spinning slowly with hues of violet, blue, and radiant silver. It pulsed with raw cosmic energy—and I was gonna use every drop of it. "Alright… let's go all in," I whispered. I reached out and channeled the power, pulling the galaxy's energy into my arms. My fists lit up like miniature supernovas, my body glowing with insane force. "If I can land just one punch… it's game over," I muttered. My eyes blazed open, hair flaring wildly. Celestial power erupted from my body like a beacon, shooting into space. Then, silence. Stillness. Focus. I turned to the massive silhouette of King Dreadixz in his Galactic Dragon form. He roared once more—and I answered: "Dreadixz, you're a great king and all… but even kings have to die someday." And I blasted forward, a violet comet streaking across the stars. Dark Don looked up mid-battle, eyes wide as I passed. "GET HIS ASS, DON!!!" Back on Earth, the people cheered. The world was watching. I surged forward, fists brimming with the heaviest celestial energy I'd ever carried while holding my sword. Dreadixz opened his massive mouth, releasing smaller dragons, each one glowing in cosmic shades of violet and indigo. They lunged, firing beams at me. I smirked. "Tch—nice moves." Meanwhile, Incarceration looked up, still fighting Dark Don, and screamed in desperation: "DREADIXZ—GET HIM! NOW!" But they were too late. I was already coming. And I was bringing the end.

I dodged the Lunaranite dragons—slashing through them, flipping over them, kicking through them, and stabbing right into their cores. I tore through them at lightspeed, evading every blast they fired at me. I grabbed

one by the arm, spun it around like a hammer, and slammed it into another before ducking under the next beast and flash-kicking it into raw destruction. I boosted forward, bouncing off each one like a comet on a mission, sending every last dragon into oblivion one by one. Then, Dreadixz's mouth began to glow—a massive cyan-blue beam charging up in the depths of his jaws. I felt the heat building. I charged up with celestial energy as I soared straight toward it. "HERE WE GO!" I roared. I rocketed through a galactic Lunaranite dragon, slicing clean through another's throat like it was paper. As I got closer to the beam, my eyes began glowing cyan from the sheer brightness. I locked in. No distractions. Bullets and blasts lit the air around me—I swerved, smacked, and sliced through each of them like they were nothing. I turned them into scrap metal and fired my own blasts back, carving a path straight through the chaos. "RAPID DASH!" I yelled. I blitzed every last galactic Lunaranite in sight, no hesitation. I was unstoppable. And I was getting closer to the beam by the second. Down on Earth, everyone was watching. TVs made by Avangard showed me tearing through the stars. Incarceration was watching mid-battle with Dark Don. My friends were watching. The whole universe had its eyes on me. Then—I hit the beam. BOOM. A massive blue nova shockwave erupted, tearing across space like a divine explosion. Then… silence. Dark Don. Incarceration. Dreadixz.

They all stared at the blast like I was gone—like I'd been disintegrated. And honestly, everyone else probably thought the same. But nah. I was STILL flying through that beam. No problem. I heard the cheers even from inside it. TVs across every planet were losing their minds. Archie was so hyped he literally lifted Olsen into the air screaming my name. I felt the light coursing through every part of my body. It was searing. Cosmic. Inescapable. But I pushed forward. I could hear Ella. Starla. Prince. Heck—even Anhia was cheering me on. All of them. I thought of my friends. My family. Avangard. The entire world. Every galaxy and universe spinning out there. This was it. My moment. To show them who I really was. Who I've always been. I reached the flare of Dreadixz's nova-charged mouth. Time slowed down. My fists were drawn back, glowing

with everything I had left. And I told myself—straight from the soul: You ARE that guy. You're HIM. You're the next King of the Celestianites. You're going to fulfill the first part of the prophecy—Celestial's Fight. You are NOT useless. You are NOT weak. You are NOT dumb. You used to be tossed aside like trash, treated like you didn't matter. But now… You've got friends who love you for who you are. YOU ARE LENS DON—THE NEXT CELESTIANITE KING! I let out a roar that echoed through space and across every dimension in the universe. "ULTRAAAAAAAAAAA!!!!! KX!!!!! SMASHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!" I SLAMMED my fists into Dreadixz's glowing snout—an explosion of celestial light BURSTED outward, ripping across the entire area.

Every. Single. Cluster. Of. Galaxies. Obliterated. My mouth was moving so fast, lips flaring with power as I kept smashing his face down with everything I had. Blinding white light consumed everything. I had turned this entire region of the universe into a white void. Dreadixz screamed, "RAHHHHHHHHHH! NOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!!! YOU!!!! YOU BOYYY!!!!!!" Space shattered. Galaxies shattered. Planets shattered. Energy shattered. LIFE shattered. The impact of that smash was so unreal, it shook the entire dimension like a universal earthquake, demolishing everything in its path. The light streaked across the stars—blasting past Dark Don and Incarceration. I heard Incarceration scream as his voice trailed into the void: "THIS IS THE LAST TIME YOU'LL HEAR FROM ME—LENS DON, THE CELESTIANITE!!!" My eyes were glowing wildly with celestial energy as the entire cluster of galaxies collapsed into nothing. Incarceration got pulled into the light, vanishing with one last scream—just as I was sent rocketing back from the shockwave. I flew downwards, flipping, spinning wildly, completely unconscious. Then— CRASH! I slammed into the surface of a distant planet, the ground erupting beneath me. Knocked out. Drained. But I did it. And everyone knew it.

CH.49 One Fifth… One Fifth Fulfilled…

I woke up in the throne room of the Castle of Celestia.

I was slouched on a massive twelve-foot golden throne. It was soft—not like marshmallow soft, but comfy enough. I leaned back, sighing, blinking away the fog in my eyes. Why was I here again?

Last thing I remembered, I launched a devastating attack at King Dreadixz in the middle of space. Then bam—I got flung through dimensions like a glitchy DVD menu. Next thing I knew, I was crashing through a planet where Dark Don was stationed. Incarceration got obliterated by the impact of my radiant strike, and Dark Don… well, I have *no* clue what happened to him.

The throne room around me gleamed with gold—walls, floor, even the ceiling. Gems of light sparkled like they were handpicked from a dream. Fancy chandelier things swung overhead like royalty themselves owned the sun.

I squinted. My vision was still blurry. Yup. I definitely got knocked out cold.

Then I saw them—everyone. All huddled in one group. Olsen, Prince, Demaurion, Archie, Ella, Power, Angel, Keyler… the whole war squad. Jaylen stood with his arms crossed, while Duke leaned coolly against a wall like he was waiting for a movie scene to cue him in.

Krane and Overbrawl were gone. Probably slithered off to whatever shady hole they crawled out from.

I slid off the throne, eyes darting around the room—before I could even speak—

"YOU'RE OKAY!!"

Starla *flew* at me, tackling me into the warmest hug I'd felt in *years.* She squeezed me so tight I almost died. Literally. I was turning red—not just from lack of air, but… yeah, I kinda liked it.

"Okay! Okay! C-can I— I CAN'T!" I sputtered, trying to peel her off.

She finally giggled and let go, noticing the blush on my cheeks. Tease.

Javier looked half-asleep. I turned to Lonnie Mae. "Is he alright? He looks like he got hit by a train."

"He'll be fine," she said softly. "I healed him with everything I had. He's just tired. And, uh… broke a little bit of his skull. Hospital later."

That made me feel better. Not the skull part—the healing part.

Olsen smirked at me and bumped fists. "You beat *both* of them down at the same time. I'm impressed."

"So am I," added Ella. "Don, you showed amazing skill through all of this. And… we have a surprise for you."

"A surprise?" I blinked.

Starla grabbed my wrist, golden rings shimmering around it. "Come and *see* for yourself!" she shouted, yanking me off like I was late to my own birthday party.

She kicked open the massive golden doors. The squad followed behind us as we tore down a royal staircase made of literal starlight, every step sparkling like magic.

She shoved open the balcony doors and practically *threw* me outside.

And that's when I saw it.

The Kingdom of Celestia—*restored.*

Cities glowing, towers gleaming, magic highways zipping with light. Golden clouds floated beneath us like fluffy cotton candy. From way up on that balcony, I could see the stars—and below them…

A *sea* of Celestianites.

An ocean of people, packed across the skyways and platforms, all screaming in unison:

"KING LENS DON! KING LENS DON! KING LENS DON!"

My tail curled. My face went red. Oh stars, I was *blushing*. People held

up signs, waved violet and gold flags, even tribes from across Avangard had come. I spotted Queen Soundzwave and Queen Relish of the Blushnites in the crowd.

Drones zipped through the sky. Cameras flashed. Reporters screamed into their mics.

And I… I smiled. The biggest smile I'd ever smiled.

"Guys…" I turned to my friends, still red-faced, tail coiled in embarrassment. "What do I even say?"

Olsen stepped beside me, placing a hand on my shoulder. "Say what's in your heart."

Sophia smirked. "And don't let your tail trip you up, Blushy Boy."

In front of the crowd stood five golden stands—Avangard's officials. Prince Lock, Jaylen, Guervens, and Coltonz, papers and pens in hand.

I knew what this meant.

I puffed out my chest and stepped forward. "Alright—no photos! LISTEN UP!"

The entire kingdom *froze.*

Starla gently draped a golden cape over my shoulders. It shimmered in the light… and suddenly, everything felt *heavy.* Not just the cape—but the moment.

"I know we started rough. I know some of you didn't fight for justice. Some of you… did things you regret." I paused. "Like taking a Lunaranite's loved one when he was just a kid."

The crowd gasped. They knew who I meant.

"But now… a new generation rises." I raised my hands. "I will take the place of King Vigilzante."

I drew my daggers, holding them high.

"I, Lens Don, the Celestianite…" I stepped forward, voice booming, "WILL BE YOUR KING FOR ETERNITY!"

The crowd *erupted*. Cheering, chanting, sobbing, backflipping. Cameras flashed like lightning. Reporters nearly fainted.

I raised my voice one last time.

"I declare the Celestianite Law: **No killing a Lunaranite's parent until**

they're at least 12 years old and can consent to vengeance! NOW GO HOME KNOWING YOU'VE GOT SOMEONE WATCHING YOUR BACK!"

Jaylen scribbled it down. Checked the box. Boom—law of the land.

We all hugged—Olsen first, then everyone piled in. I smiled.

"If it weren't for you guys… I wouldn't be here."

Later, we stepped through Angel's portal into the Grolian Forest. It smelled wet, earthy—like a jungle. The sun peeked through the trees, golden-orange against a blue sky. Felt peaceful.

We stood before Queen Grolian's castle, a towering, mossy green palace. Forestinite dragons soared above, and deer-fawn hybrids hopped around like a fantasy postcard.

I brought Kai with me—Ella had sent him to the castle for safety during the war. Eldritch must've had something to do with his insane form upgrade back then.

Lonnie Mae helped Javier limp toward the castle. Queen Grolian was waiting at the doors with open arms. They vanished inside.

I smiled. Javi was gonna be okay.

"Alright," Sophia said. "I'll stay with Javier. Gotta bring him back to Musicia once he's healed. The hedgehog deserves a break."

I nodded. "Thanks."

I stepped through Angel's next portal—back to Celestia.

From the edge of the balcony, I looked one last time at the golden valleys, the pastel skies, the glowing city.

I was king now. I could do anything. But right now?

A king's gotta rest.

"Let's go home," I said. "We all need a break after that insane journey."

Angel opened another portal—a swirling blue gate—and one by one, we stepped through.

On the other side? Sunset. Celestia's outskirts. Purple, orange, and pink sky. Ground shimmering gold.

Angel created separate portals for everyone to head home.

Then… I looked up.

Dark Don stood alone, perched high on a jagged golden rock. No one noticed him but me. He stared down at me with his usual "I'm-too-cool-for-this" face.

I nodded at him. A silent "thank you."

He rolled his eyes, but then—just for a moment—he *smirked*. Let out a tiny laugh.

Then, like a blur, he shot off. His rocket shoes switched into roller skates, and he vanished across the skyline like a silver moonbeam.

I smiled.

And then turned, stepping through the portal.

"Goodbye, Celestia…"

CH.50 The End of All 50 Chapters, A Great Ending Perhaps

The portal behind me fizzled shut with a soft whoosh as I stepped onto the familiar sidewalk of Iris Town. For the first time in forever, there was no roaring sky, no glowing weapons, no villains plotting my downfall. Just sunset.

Purple-orange skies. A breeze that actually felt nice for once. I dusted myself off, adjusted my cracked shoulder pad, and started walking through town. Everything looked exactly how I remembered it—but better.

Brighter. Like the whole town had just finished taking a deep breath after holding it for too long.

As I passed through the streets, heads started turning. "Yo, Don! That really you?" shouted old man Vek from his porch, holding a newspaper that literally had my face on it.

"Heyyy! What's up, Mr. Vek!" I waved back, trying not to trip over my own feet. Then I passed by the playground, and a bunch of kids ran up to the fence screaming, "IT'S KING LENS DON!!!" I laughed, gave a little salute.

"Still just Don, guys. I'm only king on Saturdays." "Can you fly?!" one of them shouted. "No, but I can fall with style!" I called back, making them all crack up. As I turned the corner by the bodega, I spotted Mrs. Lenu sweeping the steps.

She paused, gave me a proud smile, and nodded. I waved at her too—tried to keep it cool—but I definitely tripped a little bit when I turned

around. The neighborhood was alive. People were watching from their windows, waving from balconies, honking from their cars.

Some were holding little flags, others just gave me those "yeah, we saw what you did" smiles.

A few even clapped. I didn't expect this. I didn't need this. But I felt it. And it was… everything.

When I reached my house, I took one final look at the street behind me.

A few more familiar faces waved—kids from school, the old guy with the ice cream cart, even Jax the mailman, who gave me a thumbs-up like I'd just passed a test.

I raised my hand, gave them all one big, final wave, and said: "Love y'all. I'm goin' to bed for the next five years."

I stepped inside and let the door close behind me. Silence. Peace. I dropped my gear by the door like a crumpled hero starter pack and zombie-walked to my room. My posters? Still crooked.

My bed? Still soft. My soul? Barely intact, but we vibin'. I collapsed onto my bed face-first, pulled out my phone, and fired off a quick voice message to the group chat. "Yo. I got crowned. Gave a speech.

Cameras nearly melted my face. Prince almost died backflipping. Starla hugged me like I was a teddy bear. Oh, and Dreadixz? Gone. Toasted. We win." Send. I paused, then added another.

"Also, I tripped during the speech. It was heroic. Don't judge." Send. I stared at the ceiling for a while, then stood up, sniffed my arm, and made the ancient decision every warrior must face: "Shower or sleep…"

I sniffed again. "Shower it is." Fifteen minutes later, I walked out of the bathroom in a puff of steam, my hair damp and my spirit slightly more alive.

I cracked my neck like an old man about to teach some life lessons and flopped onto my bed.

I looked around my room one last time, wrapped up in my blankets. Before I crash, gotta say this: I started out as a 12-year-old kid full of doubts—thinking I was weak, thinking I needed fame just to be left alone. But facing what it *really* means to be a hero? Yeah, that was scary as hell.

Now, looking back on the whole adventure—Eclitsic, Celestia, the war—none of it was easy. But I made it through. I was scared every step of the way, but my confidence grew. I even started to crave the thrill of the fight.

This? This is just the first step. So here's my advice:

"Never give up on your dreams. And if you chase them, remember—the struggle is real. But it's worth it"

— Don

EPILOGUE

The final school bell at Insane Middle School let out a long, almost tired screech—as if it, too, had seen the chaos this world had survived. Inside Room 101, the air was heavy.

The desks were empty. The windows rattled faintly against the wind outside. Mr. Bassi stood by the whiteboard, silent.

He looked more beast than man—muscular, broad-shouldered, horns curved like sharpened question marks, and eyes hardened from years of war, teaching, and trying not to snap in front of 12-year-olds who wouldn't stop chewing gum during a lesson on Avangard history.

He tapped the side of an old communicator strapped to his wrist. "Power. Get to Room 101. Now."

FWOOOOOOOSH! A crackle of energy lit up the sky as Power—cosmic guardian, mentor, and walking defiance against aging—landed like a comet just outside the school, causing a few lockers to rattle in fear.

He stormed in, boots echoing through the hall until he pushed open the door to Room 101 with a bit more sass than necessary.

"Alright, Bassi," Power said, arms crossed, cosmic eyes glowing faintly, "this better not be another 'mystery meat in the cafeteria' emergency, 'cause I left my smoothie half-blended."

Mr. Bassi didn't flinch. No chuckle. No eye roll. Just a serious nod. "This is real, Power." Power's smirk faded. "…Talk to me."

Mr. Bassi walked over to his desk and slid open the top drawer. From it, he pulled a file folder sealed with a black-and-silver Lunaranite emblem: a cracked moon dripping in shadows. He tossed it onto the desk. "The Lunaranite Government has chosen a new leader. No name. No public appearance. No history in the system."

Power narrowed his eyes. "So what do we know?" Bassi looked at him. Dead serious. "One thing." "…What?" "Gravity manipulation." The room went dead silent. Power stepped back like he just got punched in the gut. "You've gotta be kidding." "I wish I was. But it doesn't end there."

Mr. Bassi opened a second file. This one wasn't stamped—it looked older. Handwritten. Desperate. "They've also launched a search party." "For what?" "Not what," Mr. Bassi corrected.

"Who." He turned the folder around and pointed to a scribbled name. "Dark Don."

Power's jaw clenched. "…He vanished after the coronation." "Right. But the last reported sighting was in the Lost World of Zeriath."

Power's eyes widened. "No way. That place was forgotten after it moved from Avangard—nobody's been there in years."

"I thought the same." Bassi paused, lowering his voice. "But here's the twist… The Lunaranites aren't just hunting our Dark Don."

"…What do you mean?" "They're looking for someone like him. Someone bigger. Stronger. Same look. Same aura. Same rage…"

He leaned in. "…But with gray steel in his eyes." Power's heart skipped. "…That doesn't sound like him at all." "No. It's someone worse."

There was a long silence. Power turned toward the window, mind racing. "That's why you called me." "Actually," Mr. Bassi sighed, "I called you to tell you something else."

Power looked back, confused. "You need to stop fighting." "Excuse me?" "You're getting older, Power. Slower. Your last battle with Incarceration almost killed you. Your time might be coming to an end—" "—I'm not done," Power snapped, stepping forward.

"I still have fight left. I still matter." Bassi stepped toward him too, horn-to-eyes. "And what happens if you're not around for the next big threat? If Olsen isn't ready to take the mantle of Earth's Might yet?" Power clenched his fists. "He is ready—" "Is he, though?"

The tension between them crackled like a thundercloud. But then— A heavy thud echoed from behind them. Both turned.

At the entrance to Room 101 stood a red, glowing, muscular figure, his

skin faintly pulsing with energy like magma under pressure.

His eyes burned crimson, and he wore nothing but dark cargo pants and brass knuckle gauntlets forged from deep-lunar alloy.

He leaned against the doorframe with a half-smirk, arms crossed. "It's been a long time, friend," he said, eyes locked on Power. "But I think he's ready." Power's eyes widened. "…You."

10,000 Years Later into the Future **(Time Travel)**

Duke tore through the ash-choked sky of Celestia, neon cannons humming like a beast barely contained beneath his mechanical suit. The city below was a burnt-out shell — smoke twisting into the night sky, flickering fires swallowing what was once a place of wonder and life. Streets lay empty, buildings crumbled, and the Enchanted Kingdom was a battlefield turned graveyard, haunted by monsters and Lunaranite shadows lurking in the ruins.

A guttural screech ripped through the air. Duke's eyes locked on a grotesque, hulking bird—its jagged feathers sharp like shattered glass, eyes glowing with the eerie red of doom. The monstrosity dove at him like a missile, talons outstretched, ready to shred.

No hesitation. Duke's cannon roared to life, unleashing a searing beam of neon green light that tore through the beast's midsection. The creature screeched in agony, breaking apart in a cascade of sparks and smoke before plummeting lifeless to the ground.

Duke slowed, hovering above the chaos, scanning the scorched earth below. The silence was deafening. No laughter, no cheers, no life—only destruction and despair. The Enchanted Kingdom, once a sanctuary, was now a battlefield where hope had seemingly died.

He clenched his fists, neon circuits on his suit pulsing like a heartbeat. Every ruined tower, every flickering ember was a scar on the soul of Celestia—and on him.

His voice, low and steady, broke the silence as he spoke into the void, the words carrying more weight than any cannon blast:

"I'm Duke. Fifteen years old. A fallen Celestianite… Now roaming ten thousand years into the future."

His gaze drifted over the desolate landscape, his words echoing with the quiet sorrow of a soul too young for this apocalypse.

"Not a great sight to see… But I'm here, helping those young Pre-Heroes. Just so… so Avangard won't fall."

He paused, the weight of his mission sinking deep into his bones.

"If I could get those Power Gems… If I could just hold them… The future would be saved."

"I know I've had a rough start, but this isn't about me… this is about the world. I've been acting so destructive, I must've been under his spell…. Forcing me to drop the Power Gems and leave, destroy an innocent place called the Kingdom of Hearts. I was being played like a puppet, toyed, and now here I am…."

Duke's fists clenched tighter, the green glow of his suit illuminating the fierce determination burning in his eyes.

"This world… it's broken now. But it's not over. Not while I'm still breathing." "If I don't get it together, **he** will use his spell once again…."

He looked up, the stars barely visible through the smoke, a silent promise hanging in the air.

"For the future… I will **fight**…."

TO BE CONTINUED...

Heroes of Avangard #2: The Lost World of Zeriath

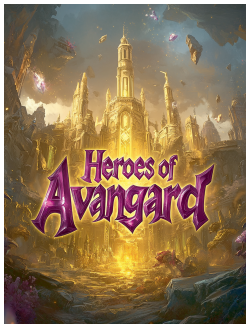
Coming Soon....

Moral of the Story *- Revenge... Just Makes Conflict Worse*

About the Author

Am a young 12 year old author who loves writing stories and drawing comics with gen z humor and American culture!

Also by Lens Don Theagene



Heroes of Avangard: War of the Celestianites

Heroes of Avangard: War of the Celestianites is a fantasy adventure about Lens Don, a 12-year-old Celestianite boy famous for being clumsy, insecure, and underestimated. Determined to prove he's more than a walking embarrassment, Don enrolls at Insane Middle School, where he dreams of becoming a true hero.

But everything changes when an ancient prophecy names him as the one destined to fulfill the "Celestial's Fight"—the key to ending the brutal war between the Celestianites and the Lunaranites. For generations, both sides have battled for the Lost Key, a relic said to decide the fate of Avangard itself. If the Lunaranites seize it, their tyrant King Dreadixz will plunge the land into ruin.

To stop them, Don must travel across Avangard's dangerous continents, face legendary beasts, and ultimately challenge Dreadixz himself. With the help of his friends—Olsen, Prince, Demaurion, Archie, Ella, and Power—Don sets out to prove he isn't weak, but a hero filled with unbreakable determination.

Will he rise to claim his destiny and save Avangard before it's too late?